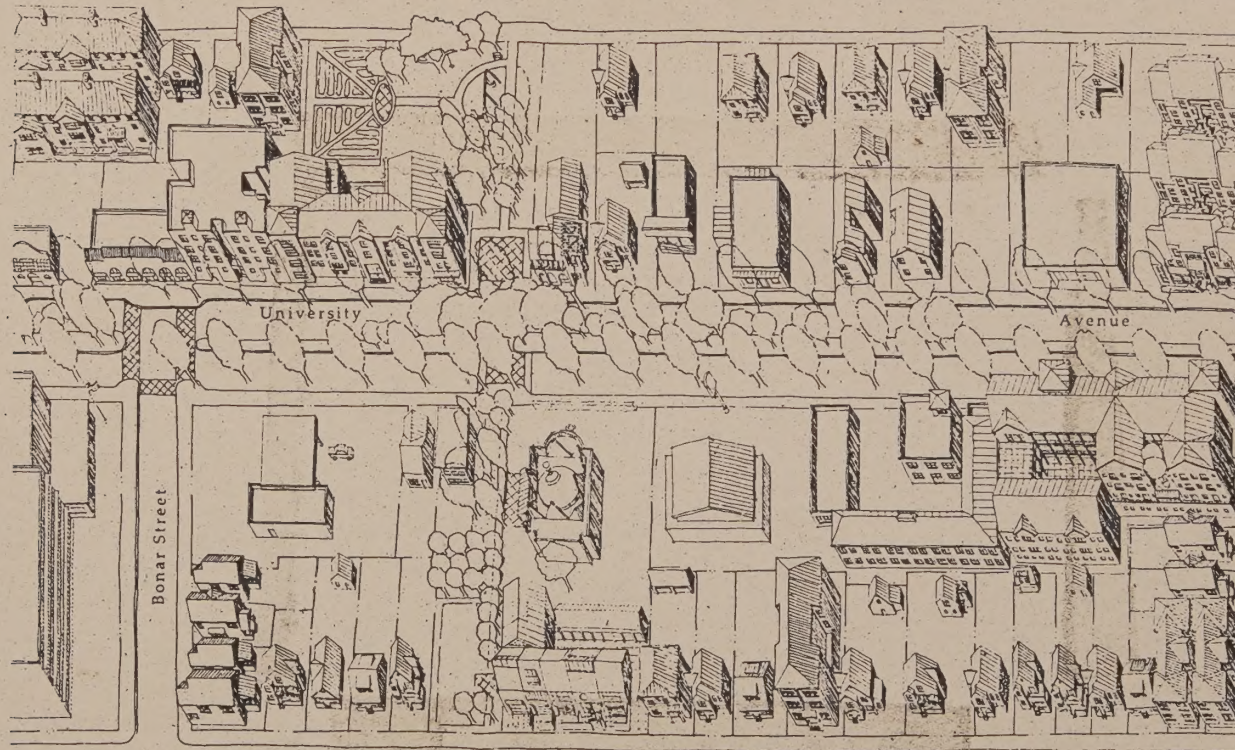


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UNIVERSITY AVENUE STRATEGIC PLAN



Prepared for the City of Berkeley
By Calthorpe Associates
with Bay Area Economics

Adopted November 1996

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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Resolution No. 58,719 -n.s.

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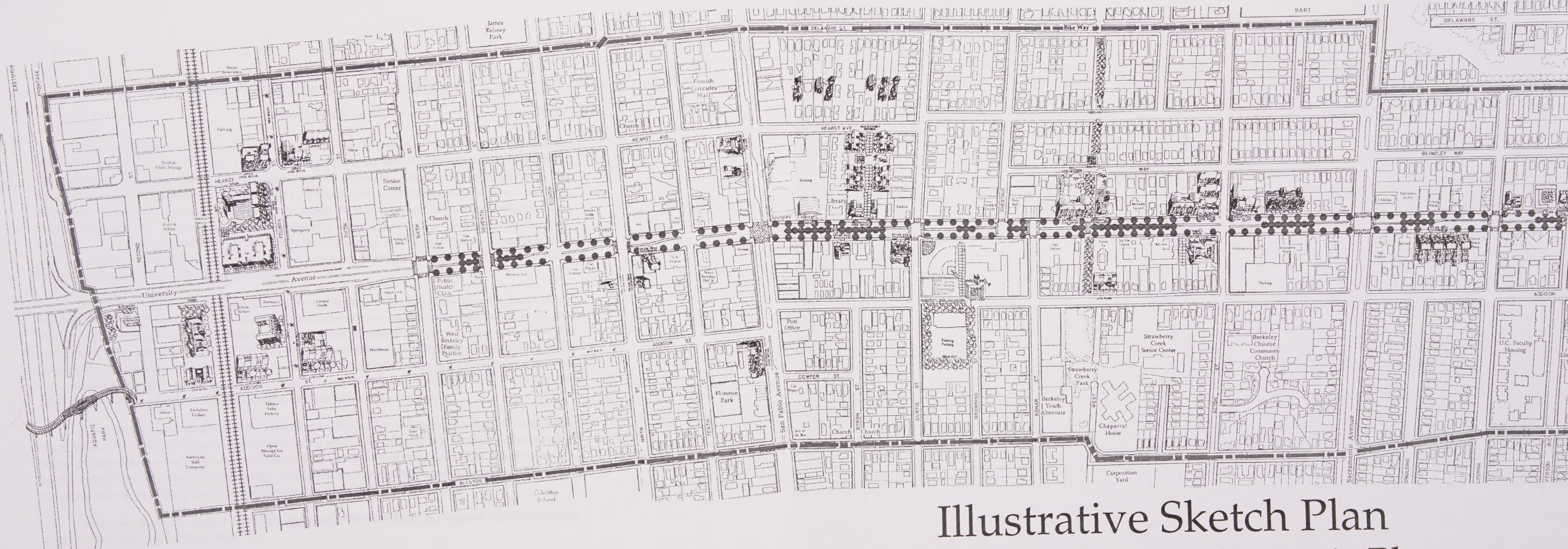
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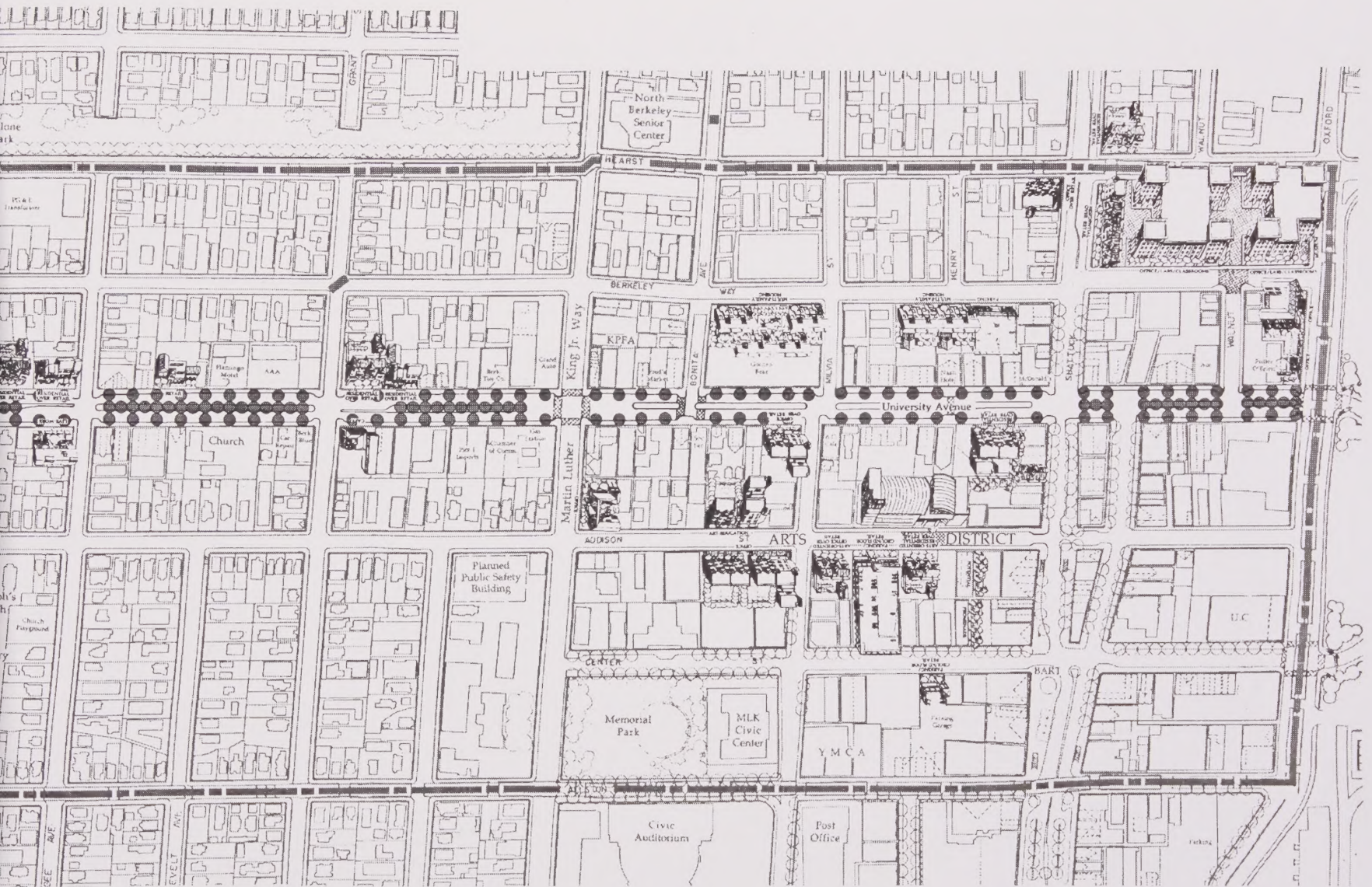
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City of Berkeley
Berkeley, California

Illustrative Sketch Plan University Avenue Strategic Plan



Calthorpe Associates
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UNIVERSITY AVENUE STRATEGIC PLAN

SUMMARY

University Avenue is currently a place to live, a place to shop, a destination, and a corridor to drive through. Those who live in the area are intimately familiar with its strengths – the best places to eat, the friendly merchants, the pleasant bicycling routes, the neighborhood hang-outs – those qualities that make city-living enjoyable. But, living along or near University Avenue also brings its residents close to its less appealing aspects – the empty storefronts, the liquor store hangouts, the rundown buildings, the muggings and the break-ins, the homelessness, and the speeding traffic. These aspects diminish the livability of the area and make it prey to change that is car-oriented and anonymous, instead of people-oriented and socially healthy. It is the sense that the Avenue is in a state of imbalance that has brought the neighbors together. It is the intent of this plan to turn this trend around and work toward improving the quality of life on the Avenue.

The University Avenue Strategic Plan has been prepared to grapple with the complex issues affecting conditions along the Avenue and in its adjacent neighborhoods. The Plan provides strategies to encourage change and rejuvenation, while placing an emphasis on preserving the stability of nearby neighborhoods. More than a simple land use plan or streetscape enhancement program, the University Avenue Strategic Plan takes an integrated approach to balancing public safety, economic development, social services, land use, urban design, housing, and transportation priorities in order to affect long-term stability within the area. Ultimately, the University Avenue Strategic Plan will fold into the City's General Plan, which is currently being updated, and serve in-lieu of an Area Plan.

Our approach to repairing University Avenue is embedded in a few basic principles. First, if change is to be constructive, we need to tackle issues carefully, considering social, economic, and physical change simultaneously. Second, change should aim to encourage and multiply the successful aspects of the community, and aid in improving the area's unique character and quality of life. And finally, this Strategic Plan should be considered a vehicle for leveraging both the community's and the City's efforts as catalysts for future investments.

With these principles in mind, the following goals should guide future development and policy-making within the University Avenue Study Area.

University Avenue Strategic Plan Goals

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>GOAL #1: INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY FOR RESIDENTS, MERCHANTS, AND CUSTOMERS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As a First Priority, Decrease Violent Crimes Against People.• In the Long Term, Design for Safety. | <p>GOAL #4: ENCOURAGE MORE PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF USES TO IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage Appropriate Infill Development. |
| <p>GOAL #2: REVITALIZE THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORRIDOR THROUGH APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance the Competitive Advantage of Avenue Merchants.• Provide Incentives for New Mixed-Use Infill.• Encourage Rehab and Re-Use of Existing Buildings.• Ensure that any Displacement of Residents is Addressed on a City-wide Level. | <p>GOAL #5: ENHANCE UNIVERSITY AVENUE AS A GATEWAY TO THE CITY, A SERIES OF NEIGHBORHOODS, AND THE DOWNTOWN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinforce the City-Wide Importance of University Avenue as a link between West Berkeley and the Downtown.• Respect the Character of the Local Neighborhoods.• Link Activity on University Avenue Back to the Supporting Neighborhoods. |
| <p>GOAL #3: PROTECT AND IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance the Quality of Life for Current Residents at All Income Levels.• Increase the Diversity of Residents and Neighborhood-Serving Merchants.• Protect Existing Local Businesses and Established Neighborhoods.• Balance Neighborhood, City-Wide, and Regional Interests.• Emphasize Neighborhood Involvement. | <p>GOAL #6: COORDINATE AND ENHANCE PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEMS, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, AND BICYCLE CIRCULATION.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make University Avenue Truly Multi-Modal.• Decrease the Dominance of the Car. |

Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations presented by the University Avenue Strategic Plan. They represent a combination of technical analysis by staff and the consultants, as well as efforts by the community to set priorities and shape strategies.

Public Safety

Public safety and the fear of crime along the University Avenue corridor has been the number one priority of this community since the beginning of the planning process. As a first action, public safety had to be reviewed, discussed, and acted upon to establish a workable setting for neighborhood revitalization. Policies related to public safety include:

- Maintain a visible and community-oriented police presence along University Avenue.
- Promote public safety problem solving.
- Improve and maintain the appearance and function of the University Avenue corridor.
- Develop and maintain crime statistics and identify hot spots within the University Avenue corridor.
- Design all improvements along the University Avenue corridor to consciously promote the safety of intended users and the surrounding neighborhood.

Land Use

While the Avenue contains many successful commercial establishments, they tend to be isolated from one another, preventing the gradual evolution to a critical mass of commercial activity. West Berkeley and Downtown are regional centers that draw patrons and employees from the broader East Bay community. With the exception of San Pablo Avenue, where there is a healthy mix of local-serving shops and services catering to the needs of surrounding residents, the rest of the street contains a haphazard mix of auto-related services, a scattering of local-serving businesses, some housing, and a few region-serving businesses. Many commercial storefronts are underutilized and not well maintained, visually giving the area a poor appearance. While some neighbors have local-serving commercial uses nearby, others must drive to buy fresh produce or take care of daily needs.

The land use strategy for revitalizing University Avenue recommends establishing a new zoning overlay designation that:

- Creates mixed-use “nodes” that are within walking distance of nearby residential areas and provide neighborhood-serving goods and services. These nodes will be the primary target sites for new commercial and mixed-use buildings, helping to focus investment in ways that make a difference to the area’s quality of life. Incentives are provided for reduced parking and open space to encourage development in these sites.
- Encourages housing with ground floor retail or office as a priority along the Avenue between commercial nodes. Allowances are provided for upper story live-work and offices. Ground floor retail is required, unless a hardship can be demonstrated. Wheelchair accessible units are encouraged at the side or rear of the ground floor. Building heights are limited to a maximum of 3 stories.

- Respects the differences among neighborhoods and distinctive identities for the area's nodes. This approach recognizes that some areas are primarily region-serving; others are oriented to the nearby neighborhoods.
- Protects the amenities of the adjoining small-scale residential neighborhoods through design guidelines for commercial development.

Urban Design

The urban design issues affecting University Avenue encompass a broad variety of topics: calming traffic, appropriate approaches to infill, designing for personal safety, providing pedestrian amenities, improving the functional and visual appearance of the street, ensuring that disinvested properties are improved over time, design and maintenance of public buildings and open spaces, and public art. Both the street and its buildings must be considered in order to create healthy and safe public spaces. Key urban design recommendations for University Avenue include:

- Design with pedestrians in mind. Buildings, storefronts, sidewalks, street lighting, trees, and amenities, must be improved and designed to provide a safer and more attractive place for people. Special Design Guidelines are provided to communicate how new buildings can make a positive contribution to the community.
- Knit the two sides of the street together to the best extent possible with streetscape enhancements. Over time a Streetscape Enhancement Program should be implemented that will plant new trees in the median and along the sides of the street, improve sidewalks and crosswalks; replace freeway-scale street lighting with human-scale light standards; provide ample pedestrian and

bicycle amenities, and institute a new public directional signage and safety program.

- Create a Greenway along the West Street (Santa Fe Railroad) right-of-way. Active uses must be encouraged along its length to provide "eyes" on the park.
- Reinforce the fact that University Avenue is an important gateway to Berkeley and the Downtown through streetscape improvements. Hold a special competition to design an appropriate gateway symbol.

Economic Development

Creating a strong environment for retail uses is central not only to fostering mixed-use nodes along the Avenue, but is critical to nurturing safe, comfortable, and livable neighborhoods. However, interviews with University Avenue merchants indicate that increased competition from new large-scale retail development in Emeryville and along Interstate 80 are adversely impacting local sales levels. This changing environment, as well as input from Avenue merchants themselves, indicate that the economic development component of the University Avenue Strategic Plan should focus primarily on assisting existing merchants and attracting new neighborhood-serving retail activity that will complement and create stronger synergies with existing retail in the central part of the Avenue between Downtown and West Berkeley. Thus, the economic development strategies for University Avenue include:

- Enhancing the competitive advantages of University Avenue merchants through a coordinated marketing program and annual promotional events.

- Focusing new business attraction efforts on bringing more neighborhood-serving businesses to the area and in particular, to the Avenue Nodes. Where appropriate, catalyst projects are identified.
- Increasing the capacity of existing locally-owned businesses to expand and develop their businesses. Undertake a pilot program to “grow” small local businesses and establish an education and training program to link merchants with private financing sources and management techniques.
- Investigating options for funding future merchant efforts and physical improvements, such as a Business Improvement District, assessment districts, and redevelopment authorities.

Housing

University Avenue is an important gateway to Berkeley, a major transportation route, and a corridor that has traditionally provided reasonably affordable housing to Berkeley residents. Today, the study area has over 3,700 units. There are, however, numerous vacant and underutilized sites, particularly along the Avenue itself, that provide opportunities for up to 700 additional residential units (a 20% increase) in a mix of new apartment buildings, live-work units, and townhouses. From a broad planning perspective, University Avenue is a particularly attractive site for new housing, since residents would have easy walking access to transit and convenient local-serving shopping. New housing along University Avenue is a key strategy to establish economically viable mixed-use “nodes,” as future residents would also be potential patrons of local businesses. Housing policies for the University Avenue planning area include:

- Encourage a diversity of new housing opportunities in the University Avenue Study Area, in terms of tenure, income, and

unit type. Provide incentives for developers to build new urban housing along University Avenue.

- Actively encourage the renovation and preservation of the existing housing stock in the University Avenue Study Area.
- Design new and renovated housing along the University Avenue corridor so it contributes to the area’s character, without negatively impacting current University Avenue residents or residents of adjacent areas.
- New and significantly renovated units should be made accessible to persons with disabilities, or be easily upgraded to fully accessible units.

Transportation

University Avenue presents an opportunity to create a truly “multi-modal corridor” – a street where walking is not only safe, but is encouraged; where frequent shuttle buses allow shoppers to easily get from one node to the next; where bicycling is a viable alternative; and where auto traffic is tamed. Selected strategies include:

- Tame traffic on University. Make it more pedestrian-friendly by timing lights, improving crosswalks, planting street trees, reducing the number of mid-block driveways or curb cuts, and encouraging the use of on-street parking for customers of local businesses.
- Work with AC Transit and U.C. to study the feasibility of creating a special and fully accessible University Avenue Electric Shuttle System.
- Use Redevelopment Agency funds to help create a satellite parking structure on the Spenger’s Parking lot that also includes mixed-use development.

- In the long term, work to provide commuter rail service along the SPRR/Amtrak line and build a new train station at the end of University Avenue.
- Improve bicycle routes on streets that are parallel to University and build a pedestrian/bike bridge to the waterfront as a top priority.

Community Services

Like most major urban corridors in the Bay Area, and the United States generally, University Avenue is home to a diverse group of health and social service organizations. Many of these organizations do the important job of helping to stabilize and enrich the lives of adult and youth residents of the area and other parts of the City. Religious organizations, nonprofit groups and publicly supported agencies constitute the bulk of service providers in the University Avenue corridor. Many of them serve both general and special-needs populations through a variety of health, social, educational and vocational services. Community concerns generally center around: how programs are sited in the city; the cumulative impact of special needs populations; monitoring and evaluation; the level of community outreach; program development; the coordination of services; and the need for other communities to provide their “fair share” of crisis level social services. Specific policies for University Avenue include:

- Coordinate planning, monitoring, and evaluation of all existing and proposed programs.
- Improve community outreach, information, and publicity.
- Improve program development.
- Facilitate better intra-city and inter-agency communication and coordination.
- Encourage other communities to take responsibility for their “fair share” of social services.

Immediate Action Items

Top Priorities for City Action

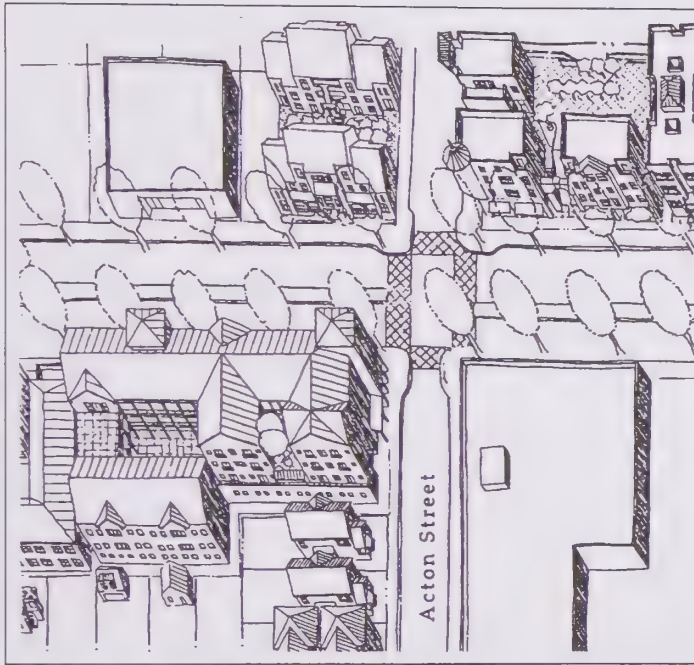
The potential along University Avenue is enormous, but it will take time, effort, and resources to reverse the negative trends. Thus, the recommendations of the Strategic Plan call for changes in policy and new ways of doing business. This section calls for early actions to be initiated by the City. These are grouped under two basic strategies: stimulate appropriate development and stabilize and improve the quality of neighborhood life.

Though many of the community's initial suggestions have already been accomplished during the planning process, a substantial new effort needs to take place to encourage private investment in buildings and businesses in the area. To do this, the City needs to take a pro-active leadership role to implement the recommendations of the Strategic Plan. Making an initial investment of City resources will help demonstrate to the private sector a public commitment to change and leverage additional private investment in the area.

The following Immediate Action Items are suggested as first steps in the implementation process. Each calls for specific actions that the City should take. The intent of these preliminary actions is to provide a coordinated set of short-term measures that will both catalyze private development and stabilize the adjacent neighborhoods. It is widely recognized that most local governments, including Berkeley, no longer have the funding reserves to allocate relatively large budgets for wide ranging revitalization programs and capital improvement projects. This plan responds to these constraints with a strategic planning and investment approach.

The following set of actions can be implemented within two years of plan adoption. Once these actions are complete, the goal is for later implementation efforts to be financed almost entirely through the recommended actions of the plan itself. These future means of financing include existing redevelopment monies, a Business Improvement District, parking revenues, and grant funding.

Not all of these commitments involve new funding allocations; some suggest reassignment of existing staff resources, others will necessitate a fresh look at existing policies and programs. Additional implementation strategies are identified in the body of the plan.



ACTON NODE

The State-owned health facility at the southwest corner of University and Acton will soon be offered as surplus property to the City. This site presents a tremendous opportunity to make the Acton node a reality. City control of this property is key to making this catalyst project a financial success. Key features of a new mixed-use development at this site include:

Land Use:	Mixed Income Housing Ground Floor Retail
Site Area:	24,000 s.f.
Residential:	40 to 45 units Mix of 1 and 2 bedrooms
Retail:	4,000 to 5,000 s.f.
Parking:	40 to 50 spaces 1 space/unit + min. retail parking
Open Space:	5,250 to 5,850 s.f. on-site Will meet or exceed 125 s.f./unit

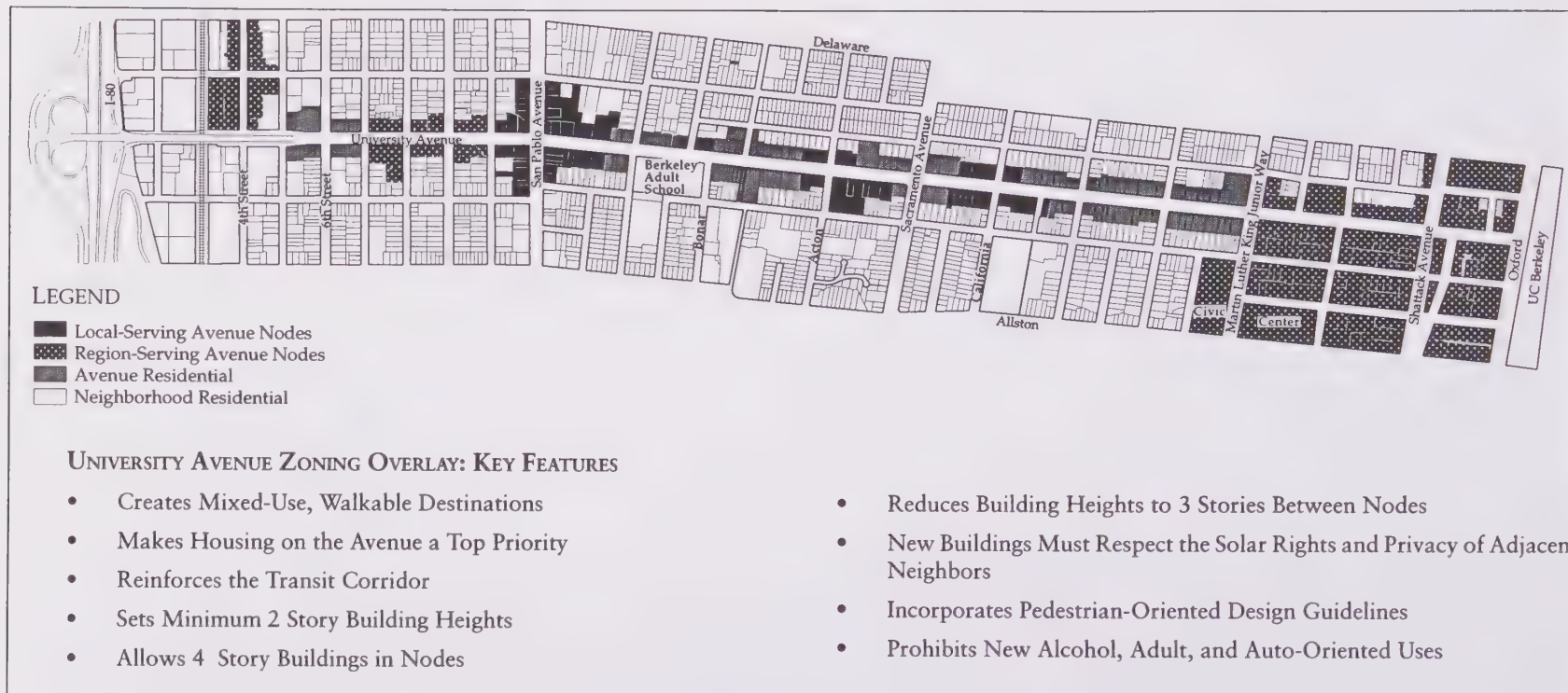
1. DEVELOP ACTON STREET NODE

Issue:

The Acton Street node is a major opportunity area along the University Avenue corridor and is within walking distance of the North Berkeley BART station. One parcel, a State-owned health facility, is potentially available to the City as surplus property. The State Employment Development Department is planning to move out of the area within the next year and may become a second opportunity site. In the future, other sites within this node may also be placed on the market for new development. Should the City acquire the State Health Facility, it may wish to offer the site to housing developers on the condition they acquire other property in the node. The confluence of these factors indicates that this area should be a top priority for City resources.

Recommendation:

The Acton Street node should be made a priority for the development of new mixed-use projects which include retail, office and housing targeted primarily to moderate with a low income component in the neighborhoods to inspire the broadest range of proposals. Staff resources should be focused on facilitating the transfer and development of the underutilized parcels at this node. In addition to acquiring the State Health Facility, the City should consider targeting Housing Trust Fund resources to create a significant mixed-use project on the north side of the node. The Acton Street node should also be a top priority location for completion of the University Avenue streetscape improvements recommended by the Strategic Plan and improving the appearance and safety of walking connections across University Avenue and to the North Berkeley BART Station.



2. AMEND ZONING ORDINANCE

Issue:

The current C-1 zoning along University Avenue and the R-2, R-2A, and R-1 zoning for the rest of the planning area is not specific enough to accomplish the goals of revitalization in terms of mix of commercial uses, building heights, and design features. In addition, the current zoning permits a number of undesirable uses that detract from the safety and vitality of the Avenue.

Recommendation:

Adopt a zoning overlay designation that encourages nodal development, incorporates urban design guidelines, and prohibits certain undesirable uses (also see Action Item #7). These concepts are developed in the Land Use and Urban Design sections of this Plan.

3. EXPAND PARKING OPPORTUNITIES

Issue:

In order to help stimulate commercial activity along the Avenue, a number of small, city-sponsored shared parking facilities should be created either as simple lots or a structure in the case of West Berkeley. New mixed-use infill development will also generate increased parking demand, which could be most effectively met through a couple of strategically located parking sites. This strategy would also help stimulate this desired private development to the extent that it can reduce parking costs.

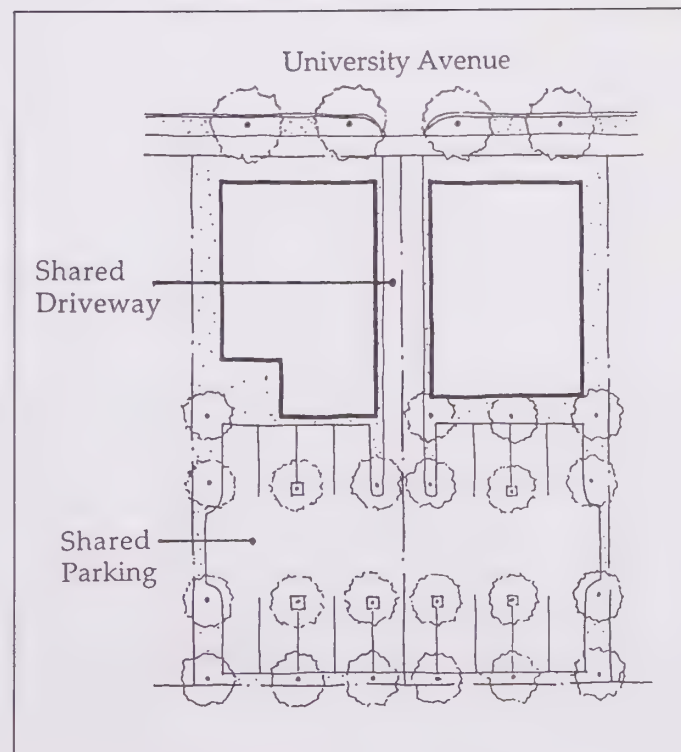
Recommendation:

Conduct a comprehensive Parking Study to identify the level of need, appropriate locations and key opportunities for a number of small, strategically located parking sites, in addition to the structure under consideration for the Fourth Street area. As part of the study, develop a self-supporting financing plan. In the short-term, remove Zoning Ordinance barriers to providing shared parking, and reduce parking requirements for uses with complementary peak parking needs.

4. REHABILITATE AND REUSE STRUCTURES BETWEEN MILVIA AND SHATTUCK

Issue:

The many vacant storefronts in this block of University Avenue impair the viability of drawing new tenants to the area. Several of the buildings are constructed with unreinforced masonry or have been damaged by previous earthquakes, leaving them in need of seismic upgrades. Building facades are dilapidated and deteriorated. Two historic Single Room Occupancy Hotels (SROs) have been vacant (and seismically damaged) for a number of years and attempts to repair and re-open them have failed. And, the U.C. Theater, the block's primary entertainment anchor, is seismically damaged and, for economic reasons, may wish to add additional screens in the future. All of these factors combine to affect both the vitality of Downtown and the safety and security of nearby neighborhoods.



Recommendation:

Target the Milvia to Shattuck block of University Avenue for use of the Seismic Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund, Facade Improvement Grants, and the Rental Acquisition Program, as well as stronger enforcement of the Anti-Blight Ordinance and other City codes. In addition, allow those SRO units that have been vacant for a long period of time, approximately 55 units, to be considered for alternative uses (see Action Item 10 below).

5. COORDINATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Issue:

The City needs to coordinate the revitalization efforts along University Avenue in a more pro-active manner. Though staff is currently assigned to the area, they are often also responsible for tracking activities in other areas of the city. A single person would be more effective at facilitating change in this very difficult area. In addition, coordinated marketing and events by Avenue merchants is seen as a necessary component of economic revitalization in the area. This effort will provide a transition from City support to merchant and neighborhood support of these development and marketing activities.



ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO THE MILVIA-SHATTUCK BLOCK

- Seismic Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund
- Facade Improvement Grant Fund
- Rental Acquisition Program
- Anti-Blight Ordinance Enforcement
- Streetscape Improvement Program
- Economic Development and Marketing Activities

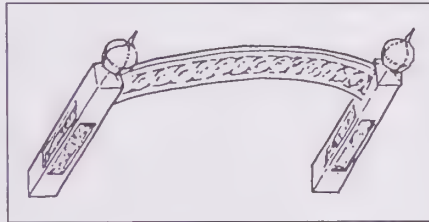
Recommendation:

Assign one City staff person for a period of two years specifically to University Avenue with the task of coordinating merchant activities and promotional events, working with property owners to encourage building rehabilitation and development on opportunity sites, linking tenants with available space, developing a proposal for a Business Improvement District (BID) which would allow merchants to become self-supporting, and facilitating information flow to merchants, property owners, and residents.

6. CONDUCT GATEWAY DESIGN COMPETITION

Issue:

University Avenue is a gateway to the city, the Avenue, and the Downtown, yet there is no physical indication that one has entered these important city places.



Recommendation:

Conduct a design competition to develop an appropriate gateway for University Avenue. Scope of the project should be limited to modest construction /planting costs.

7. DEVELOP ANNUAL CRIME REPORT

Issue:

Since the initiation of the planning effort, police presence along University Avenue has increased. However, crime prevention remains a priority for neighborhood residents and merchants. The availability of meaningful crime statistics has been an important issue for the University Avenue community. To date, crime data is recorded at the census tract level, which does not correspond with the boundaries of the University Avenue corridor,

and by calls for service at specific locations. The community feels that it can be more helpful and proactive with better information that accurately represents the Plan area.

Recommendation:

A police Crime Analysis Unit has recently been created to help identify hot spots and trends throughout the city. The Crime Analysis Unit should develop and maintain a more focused set of crime data for the University Avenue corridor. The Crime Analysis Unit should also work with the University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission to educate the community as to how crime statistics are maintained, the types of calls for service, trends and the limitations of the data.

8. LIMIT PERMITTED USES

Issue:

University Avenue is currently home to a number of liquor stores, auto-oriented uses, and industrial/warehousing uses that do not fit with the desired character and function of the corridor. Current zoning treats all of University Avenue as a single place and permits a very broad range of uses. This policy framework fundamentally works against many of the goals of the Strategic Plan. Like other commercial corridors in Berkeley, the list of permitted uses along University Avenue should be tailored to discourage or prohibit activities that are not consistent with the intent of this plan.

Recommendation:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance overlay designation, prohibit or discourage certain uses along University Avenue, such as new alcohol-related establishments (unless in conjunction with a restaurant), pawn shops, adult-oriented businesses, automobile and other vehicle-oriented uses, drive-in food and services, and industrial/warehouse uses.

9. INVENTORY REHABILITATION NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Issue:

The physical condition of commercial and residential properties is a concern for the entire community. A variety of code enforcement, rehabilitation and improvement efforts are required to stabilize the stock of the buildings and properties. An inventory of rehabilitation needs and opportunities can more effectively coordinate rehabilitation efforts and identify appropriate financing sources.

Recommendation:

Conduct an inventory of all properties and structures in the study area to assess physical condition, develop preliminary costs for rehabilitation and improvements and identify appropriate mechanisms for making improvements, such as code enforcement, grants, revolving loan funds, Business Improvement Districts, etc.

10. PERMIT LIMITED SRO CONVERSION

Issue:

There are 136 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units located in four separate buildings on the block of University Avenue, between Milvia Street and Shattuck Avenue. On the south side, 55 of those units are vacant and split between two buildings, on the north side the remaining 81 units are occupied, and located in two additional buildings. All four buildings are in need of seismic retrofit, and varying degrees of general rehabilitation work.

The rehabilitation of these units has proved to be problematic given, among other factors, the existing Residential Hotel Non-conversion Ordinance that requires replacement of any SRO unit that is converted to another use. In addition, other potential SRO sites, namely the motels along the avenue, are not viable options given the cost of the land and the lack of funding commitment. One of the key issues for the block of University Avenue between Milvia and Shattuck is how the City can encourage the

rehabilitation of the buildings while concurrently preserving housing stock for those with very low incomes.

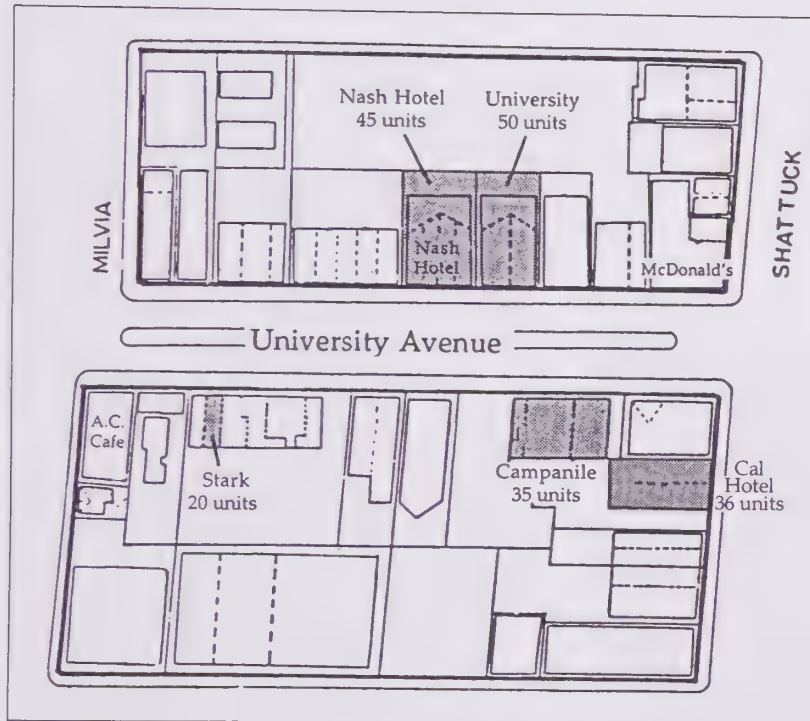
Recommendation:

Amend the City's Residential Non-Conversion Ordinance to permit the conversion of long-term vacant units (such as the 55 units on University Avenue) and mitigate the loss of those very low income units through a City commitment to the following: 1) Assist in the replacement of the 55 vacant units with 55 units affordable to low income, single individuals over time within the city limits; 2) encourage the development of housing projects which include affordable units accessible to persons with disabilities or are easily converted to fully accessible units at the two sites currently occupied by these 55 units; 3) if other uses than housing with ground floor retail are proposed for the 55 units, an appropriate in lieu fee shall be paid into the Housing Trust Fund for the purpose of maintaining long-term affordable housing.



Also, specifically target the 81 SRO units, as well as the 36 units on Shattuck, which are in need of rehabilitation for the following: 1) Within a six month timetable the City should meet with individual owners in an attempt to identify specific causes for building disrepair; 2) Identify issues and propose options to facilitate restoration and rehabilitation which may

include: a) changing the specific configurations of units to reflect more desirable living arrangements, b) understanding the financial ramifications of seismic upgrading and other building code requirements, c) reviewing funding assistance options including; tax abatement/tax credit, and other sources, d) keeping in mind the goal to avoid displacement of building occupants; if any of the 81 units are lost, assist in the replacement with units affordable and accessible to low income, single individuals, and persons with disabilities over time within the city limits, e) establishing specific building management criteria with on going monitoring as prerequisite to assistance.



11. EXTEND UNIVERSITY AVENUE SUBCOMMITTEE (FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR)

Issue:

The University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission and members of the community that have attended their meetings, have made significant headway identifying problems, issues, and solutions for the corridor. Additional efforts, however, are needed to monitor the progress of implementation and to delve further into concerns related to public safety, economic revitalization, land use and social services. Thus, there is a need for an on-going forum for discussing community concerns and identifying appropriate strategies.

Recommendation:

Continue to hold periodic meetings of the University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission. The primary mission of the Committee will be to monitor implementation of the Plan, problem solve and expand and encourage community participation. The Committee should focus on identifying emerging barriers to the corridor's improvement such as: problematic businesses, deteriorated structures and facades, inadequate public amenities, and negligent management of properties. The Committees should also address responsible management and problem-solving techniques for social services and public safety, and the review any plans for siting new housing projects with social service components.

INTRODUCTION

The University Avenue Strategic Plan has been prepared to grapple with the complex issues affecting conditions along the Avenue and in its adjacent neighborhoods. The Plan provides strategies to encourage change and rejuvenation, while placing an emphasis on preserving the stability of nearby neighborhoods. More than a simple land use plan or streetscape enhancement program, the University Avenue Strategic Plan takes an integrated approach to balancing public safety, economic development, social services, land use, urban design, housing, and transportation priorities in order to affect long-term stability within the area.

This Strategic Plan is also an effort to clarify the City's goals and policies as they pertain to the University Avenue Study Area. Though future decisions will be within the context of broader city-wide zoning, economic development, and permit processing requirements, our vision for University Avenue is in some ways a departure from past policies. The complexity of issues facing this area requires new and innovative approaches to problem-solving. And, while University Avenue may be similar to other major streets within the city, it is in itself unique. Therefore, where necessary to achieve our vision, specific policy or ordinance amendments are recommended. Ultimately, the University Avenue Strategic Plan will fold into the City's General Plan, which is currently being updated, and serve in lieu of an Area Plan.



As described below in greater detail, preparing this plan has been product of numerous meetings and workshops with the community. In fact, much of what is contained in the Strategic Plan is the compilation of suggestions from residents, merchants, property owners, and interested citizens. Though the vast majority of the policies and strategies included here represent a consensus of opinions, there remain differences and disagreements. Where appropriate, these differences are identified. Perhaps, though, it is sufficient to say that planning for University Avenue will be an on-going process. The adoption of this document is only a first step in a long term effort.

How to Use This Report

This document has been designed to allow readers to quickly and easily understand important recommendations and the rationale for their suggestion. It addresses both Area-Wide concerns, as well as conditions in specific Sub-Areas (see below), and is organized as follows:

Strategic Plan Process: The section describes the extent of public involvement and the data gathering efforts used to prepare and refine the plan's recommendations.

Goals and Vision: Clarifies the overarching priorities for the area.

Area-Wide Issues and Strategies: Though each block along University Avenue has its own set of opportunities and problems, there are a number of issues that affect the entire corridor. This section addresses these concerns by topic area: Public Safety, Land Use, Urban Design, Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, and Social Services.

Sub-Area Issues and Strategies: The Corridor has been divided into four "Sub-Areas" so that the plan can build on the differences between places along the Avenue, as well as identify strategies for specific sites.

Design Guidelines: As a complement to the City's zoning ordinance and as a guide for future zoning amendments, a series of Design Guidelines are provided that set forth architectural and site planning standards for new development within the study area.

Implementation: This section maps an approach to moving forward with the recommendations of the Strategic Plan. It identifies the steps that will need to be taken, when they should be accomplished, and how they might be financed.

Appendix: Detailed tables and other data cited in the body of the report.

There are several companion documents that may be consulted which provide more detailed background data than could be provided in this document. These documents include:

- "The University Avenue Area Statistical Profile." Prepared by the City of Berkeley Planning Department, January, 1994.
- "University Avenue Strategic Plan: Land Use, Urban Design, and Economic Opportunities and Constraints" (Opportunities and Constraints Report). Prepared for the City of Berkeley by Calthorpe Associates with Bay Area Economics, March, 1995.
- "University Avenue Strategic Plan: Merchants Survey." Prepared for the City of Berkeley by Bay Area Economics, August, 1995.
- Workshop Summaries, October 23, 1993 and March 3, 1994.

These documents can be obtained through the City of Berkeley Planning Department.

In addition, this plan is coordinated with and builds upon recent planning and implementation efforts in the Downtown and West Berkeley, including: "The Downtown Plan," "Downtown Public Improvements Plan," "Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines," "Civic Center Master Plan," and the "West Berkeley Area Plan." Variations with those plans, as recommended in this plan, are noted.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

This Plan is the product of a wide range of community meetings, workshops, data analysis, and surveys. This section describes this process and how it has shaped the recommendations of the Strategic Plan.

General Plan Workshops

In Fall 1993 and Spring 1994 two community workshops were held as part of the General Plan update process to identify issues of concern and develop a common vision for the University Avenue corridor. As a result of these workshops, a University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission was formed to guide an independent planning effort. These early workshops and meetings produced a set of preliminary goals to guide future decision-making. The work of the University Avenue Subcommittee and the community have continued through the Strategic Planning Process and has helped define the specific recommendations presented here.

University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission Meetings

The University Avenue Subcommittee addressed all of the topics identified through the goals established early on in the process. Special focus was given to three of the topics not fully addressed by the consultants: Public Safety, Housing, and Social Services. These topic areas were the subject of several meetings of the University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission.

The Subcommittee, staff, and consultants worked closely with the City Manager's office and the Police Department to identify public safety issues (e.g. assessing levels of crime, problematic behavior, and geographic "hot spots"), resources available, as well as potential solutions, including neighborhood watch programs, problem solving techniques, and physical design changes.

To arrive at a set of recommended housing policies, the planning team gathered data on the existing housing stock and analyzed three prototypical development projects: a mixed-use building with ground floor retail and upper story apartments, a primarily residential apartment project, and a live-work complex. These three typical developments were tested in term of possible conflicts with current zoning standards and financial



The first hour of each Sub-Area workshop was spent on a walking tour.

feasibility. The results of this analysis helped shape and inform the recommendations of the housing and land use strategies.

The recommended social service policies and strategies resulted from an analysis of existing social service providers and clients by sub-area. The data was used to reassess, improve and monitor the delivery of social services within the corridor and city-wide.

All of this information was reviewed by the Subcommittee and the community, and was used as the foundation for the recommendations presented in this document for these three critical issues.

Sub-Area Workshops

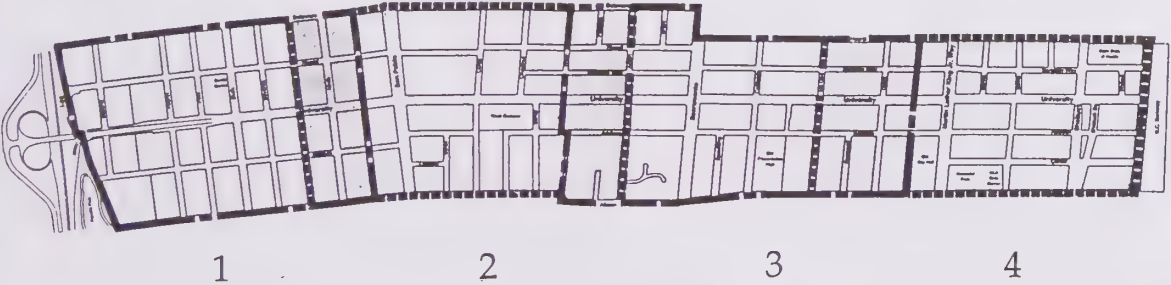
Once the general goals were set it became necessary to specify appropriate policies and identify implementation strategies. To do this, the City of Berkeley sponsored a series of workshops and hired Calthorpe Associates and Bay Area Economics to study future land use, transportation,

economic development, housing, and urban design along the entire length of University Avenue.

To facilitate the gathering of information and to allow the surfacing of unique qualities within each part of the Avenue, the University Avenue Corridor was divided into four Sub-Areas. The Sub-Areas are as follows:

- Sub-Area 1: I-80 Freeway to Tenth Street
- Sub-Area 2: Eighth Street to Acton Street
- Sub-Area 3: Strawberry Creek Park and the West Street Right-of-Way to McKinley Street between Grant and MLK Jr. Way and
- Sub-Area 4 : Roosevelt Avenue to Oxford Street and the U.C. Berkeley campus.

The Sub-Areas were not intended to and do not reflect actual neighborhoods along the University Avenue corridor. Instead, they were developed for planning purposes only. Their boundaries purposely overlap to ensure a thorough analysis of conditions.



University Avenue Strategic Plan Sub-Areas

Workshops in each of the four Sub-Areas were held from February 27 to March 7, 1995. For these meetings, Calthorpe Associates, Bay Area Economics, and City Staff compiled existing available information on the various opportunities and constraints in each of the sub-areas. This involved photographing and documenting existing conditions, analyzing economic data, talking with property owners, merchants, and developers, and reviewing previously prepared studies, including the Avenues Plan, the Downtown Public Improvements Plan, and the West Berkeley Plan. Over 100 members of the community participated in these afternoon and evening sessions.

The first hour of each workshop was spent walking through the sub-area. This gave everyone involved the opportunity to see and discuss the many possibilities and to voice concerns about current and potential problems. During the second hour of the workshop, presentations were made on economic trends and market constraints in the area, as well as a study of current land use patterns and a preliminary analysis of opportunity and constraints sites.

The final results of these workshops were a “shopping list” of issues, ideas, concerns, opportunities, and constraints that should be addressed by the Strategic Plan. Comments from these meetings are included in the “University Avenue Strategic Plan: Land Use, Urban Design, and Economic Opportunities and Constraints” Report.

Community Design Workshops

On April 1 and April 20, 1995, two workshops were held that focused on land use and urban design issues along the University Avenue Corridor. The intent of these workshops was to develop, review, and critique planning concepts with local residents and property owners.

Community Design Workshop #1

For a full Saturday, participants were asked to take a first pass at problem solving through urban design. Each of the groups was given a Sub-Area “Armature Plan” - an enhanced base map with streets, public spaces, natural features, existing buildings and possible “opportunity sites” The groups also received a series of playing cards or land use “icons” which represented various land uses and amenities that could be encouraged within the University Avenue Corridor. The size of these icons varied depending on the amount of land that is required to build a minimum sized project. For example, 50 units of apartments could be built on only an acre of land, while the same amount of single-family housing would need three or four acres. Similarly, a 30,000 square foot supermarket with an appropriate amount of parking would need at least 2 acres, while a mixed-use building,



In the first workshop, participants were asked to take a first pass at problem-solving. Small groups developed plans for each sub-area.

GOALS AND VISION

“The overriding goal should be to enhance University Avenue as a place to be...”

Workshop Participant and Resident

University Avenue is currently a place to live, a place to shop, a destination, and a corridor to drive through. Those who live in the area are intimately familiar with its strengths – the best places to eat, the friendly merchants, the pleasant bicycling routes, the neighborhood hangouts – those qualities that make city-living enjoyable. But, living along or near University Avenue also brings its residents close to its less appealing aspects – the empty storefronts, the local drug merchants, the rundown buildings, the muggings and the break-ins, the homelessness, and the speeding traffic. These aspects diminish the livability of the area and make it vulnerable to change that is car-oriented and anonymous, instead of people-oriented and socially healthy. It is the sense that the Avenue is in a state of imbalance that has brought the neighbors together. It is the intent of this plan to turn this trend around and work toward improving the quality of life on the Avenue.

Our approach to repairing University Avenue is embedded in a few basic principles. First, if change is to be constructive, we need to tackle issues comprehensively, considering social, economic, and physical change simultaneously. Second, change should aim to encourage and multiply the successful aspects of the community, and aid in improving the area’s unique character and quality of life. And finally, this Strategic Plan should be considered a vehicle for leveraging both the community’s and the City’s efforts as catalysts for future investments.

Imagine a place that is different from any other major street in Berkeley not a replica of Shattuck, College, or Telegraph Avenues, but a character unique to itself. A place with a diversity of residents – newcomers and old faithfuls, rich and poor, young and old, singles and families. An attractive and safe street lined with busy shops and dotted with public spaces



University Avenue is a place to live, a place to shop, a destination, and a corridor to drive through. Residents are intimately familiar with its amenities – the best places to eat, the friendly merchants, the pleasant bicycling routes, the neighborhood hang-outs.

that invite social interaction. A mingling of nationalities and lifestyles. A place that represents the best of Berkeley's social commitments, its ecological values, and its way of life.

With these principles in mind, the following goals should guide future development and policy-making within the University Avenue Study Area.

University Avenue Strategic Plan Goals

- GOAL #1:** INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY FOR RESIDENTS, MERCHANTS, AND CUSTOMERS.
- As a First Priority, Decrease Violent Crimes Against People.
 - In the Long Term, Design for Safety.
- GOAL #2:** REVITALIZE THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORRIDOR THROUGH APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING.
- Enhance the Competitive Advantage of Avenue Merchants.
 - Provide Incentives for New Mixed-Use Infill.
 - Encourage Rehab and Re-Use of Existing Buildings.
 - Ensure that any Displacement of Residents is Addressed on a City-wide Level.

- GOAL #3:** PROTECT AND IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE.
- Enhance the Quality of Life for Current Residents at All Income Levels.
 - Increase the Diversity of Residents and Neighborhood-Serving Merchants.
 - Protect Existing Local Businesses and Established Neighborhoods.
 - Balance Neighborhood, City-Wide, and Regional Interests.
 - Emphasize Neighborhood Involvement.
- GOAL #4:** ENCOURAGE MORE PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF USES TO IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY.
- Encourage Appropriate Infill Development.
- GOAL #5:** ENHANCE UNIVERSITY AVENUE AS A GATEWAY TO THE CITY, A SERIES OF NEIGHBORHOODS, AND THE DOWNTOWN.
- Reinforce the City-Wide Importance of University Avenue as a link between West Berkeley and the Downtown.
 - Respect the Character of the Local Neighborhoods.
 - Link Activity on University Avenue Back to the Supporting Neighborhoods.
- GOAL #6:** COORDINATE AND ENHANCE PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEMS, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, AND BICYCLE CIRCULATION.
- Make University Avenue Truly Multi-Modal.
 - Decrease the Dominance of the Car.

The potential along University Avenue is enormous, but it will take time and effort to reverse the negative trends and evolve toward a more active, economically viable, and livable place.

AREA-WIDE ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Opportunities and Constraints

There are many positive attributes to the Avenue and its surrounding neighborhoods. For instance, residents along or near San Pablo Avenue can walk to a wide variety of small, locally-owned businesses. Residents of Downtown are close to movie theaters, restaurants, support services, job opportunities, and BART. The neighborhoods north and south of the Avenue are predominately stable and attractive, with a diversity of housing types and households.

Residents of the area are, though, affected by activities on University Avenue where an atmosphere of instability has emerged over the last few years. They have expressed an interest in modifying the policies and programs that apply to development and activities on the Avenue so that economic revitalization can occur and current spillover problems are minimized. In doing this, members of the community have identified a broad range of issues affecting the livability and economic vitality of University Avenue, including crime, dilapidated buildings, vacant storefronts, a predominance of rental housing, a high proportion of City-supported social services, numerous liquor stores, lack of neighborhood-serving retail, auto-oriented street and building design, a poor pedestrian environment, aphid-infested street trees, and a minimum of public spaces.



Underutilized parcels scattered along the Avenue are "opportunities" for future infill and revitalization.

Key Facts

The degree to which data is available to support community concerns varies. Although data related to each of these topics has been gathered, analyzed, and presented in this document and its companion volume, the “Opportunities and Constraints Report,” there is insufficient statistical evidence to make conclusions relative to the “cause and effect” relationships between these factors and the conditions along the Avenue. Throughout this report and prior documents, data has been provided and used as only one source of information to illuminate the range of issues raised by community members, development experts, and area merchants.

Key facts related to the University Avenue study area include:¹

CRIME²

- 1995 incidence of “Crimes Against Persons” and Crimes Against Property” for the Plan Area as a whole were 19% and 14% of the city-wide totals respectively. Incidence of all crime (against persons and property) ranked by Sub-Area, as a percent of the whole Plan area crimes, were: Sub-Area 4 (39%), Sub-Area 2 (23%), Sub-Area 1 (22%) and Sub-Area 3 (16%).
- When compared to other similar commercial corridors within the City, the incidence of crime in the University Avenue Plan area reflects similar levels of crime (measured by crimes per linear foot of corridor). Of the five corridors analyzed, Shattuck had the highest ratio of crime on the Avenue (3.88), followed by Telegraph (3.78) and University Avenue (3.37). For the surrounding Neighborhoods, Telegraph had the highest ratio (6.68), followed by University Avenue (5.96), and Shattuck (5.29). Combined ratios of Avenue and Neighborhoods (entire study areas) rank Telegraph with the highest (10.46), followed by University Avenue (9.33), and Shattuck (9.17).

BUILDINGS

- Over 75 buildings within the study area have been seismically damaged or need repairs to bring them up to current seismic standards. Additional buildings need basic maintenance, facade renovation, and modernization.
- Seismically damaged buildings are clustered east of MLK Way in the Downtown, where older, mid-rise building-types predominate. Two vacant SRO’s, containing 55 units, are among those most severely affected by seismic damage. The U.C. Theater has also been damaged.

BUSINESSES

- Though at the time this plan was prepared there were over 25 vacant storefronts on University Avenue, the number of new businesses along the Avenue has grown at a faster rate than the city as a whole.³
- Several liquor stores are located within the area and packaged alcohol is also available at grocery stores and some gas stations. The city’s other major streets, particularly those within a mile of the UC campus, also have clusters of establishments with liquor licenses. Data is not available to correlate incidents of crime to liquor store locations.

INCOMES

- Median incomes of households in the census tracts encompassing University Avenue for 1980 was 80% of the city-wide median, by 1990 it had increased to 81%.⁴
- Median incomes of all households in the study area census tracts in 1990 were \$24,000 or 64% of county-wide median incomes. However, the median incomes of households in the census tract area were only 54% of county incomes for 2-person families and 48% of county median incomes for 3-person families.⁵



New investments such as this mixed-use building, which harmonizes with its older neighbors, are bringing new activity and liveliness to University Avenue.

HOUSING

- Roughly 80% of the study area's housing stock are rental units. This represents approximately 12% of the city's rental housing.
- Ownership housing in the study area has increased at a faster rate than in the city as a whole.⁶
- Though several condominium apartment buildings have recently been constructed along the city's other "Avenues," none have been located along University Avenue.
- Median rents in the study area are comparable to the city as a whole.⁷

- Median home values and median contract rents within the Census Tract Area have increased at a similar rate to the rest of the city.⁸
- The study area includes approximately 51% of the city's units/beds targeted for the homeless population and 74% of the city's non-subsidized Single Room Occupancy units.⁹

COMMUNITY SERVICES

- There are 32 community service providers located in the study area. They provide a range of Enrichment, Prevention/Advancement, Safety Net, and Crisis services.
- The greatest number of the area's community service providers (13 or 41%) are located in the Downtown.

STREETScape

- University Avenue carries up to 53,000 cars per day between the freeway and San Pablo Avenue. However, between San Pablo and MLK Way traffic volumes decrease and speeding traffic increases. Streetlights are timed above the posted 30 mph speed limit.
- Most sidewalks along University are narrow, have broken pavement, and the trees on either side of the street are heavily infested with aphids, which secrete a sticky substance onto them.
- Crosswalks are not highly visible to drivers and push-button light activators are not working properly.
- Bus shelters and other pedestrian amenities are being removed without replacement.
- Primary walking and bicycling connections to BART and other important local destinations are not well lit or signed.

It is a delicate balance that the University Avenue Strategic Plan must strike – promoting change and safety, without losing the best qualities of the area. How we achieve these goals, though, is the most challenging aspect of this planning effort. Community members have different concerns about the emphasis of the plan that are, in the long run, not mutually exclusive but do have short-term implications that could be contradictory, such as how to invest City resources in housing developments or how to plan for future social services. Factoring into this discussion is the fact that many of the Avenue’s problems are related to regional or even national trends that are neither created nor solved at the local level. The recent recession, the changing retail environment where more large off-price stores are moving into the East Bay trade area, increasing homelessness, and poverty are all affecting the conditions we see on University Avenue. This Strategic Plan will not be able to solve all of these issues, but can provide a strong context to lessen their impact, while maintaining quality of life.



Opportunity sites represent locations where significant renovations or new construction may occur over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan.

Opportunity Sites

As part of the planning for University Avenue, “opportunity sites” were identified. These sites represent locations where significant renovations or new construction may occur over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan. The sites were selected based on a number of land use, urban design, and economic criteria, and include:

- Sites with Planned or In-Process Projects
- Vacant Parcels
- For-Sale Properties
- Abandoned Properties
- Significantly Blighted Buildings
- Underutilized Properties
- Sites with Uses that are Inconsistent with the Intent of the Strategic Plan.

As illustrated in the Opportunity Sites Map below, the parcels where significant change is expected to occur over the next 5 to 10 years, tend to be clustered into nodes or groupings of parcels. While this trend may represent pockets of decline today, these sites are locations where carefully planned and managed development can be catalysts for future investment and long term revitalization.



Opportunity Sites

Economic and Market Conditions

The following discussion reflects a snapshot look at market conditions at a specific point in time. Its intent is to assist in making policy decisions that are grounded in fact, with the understanding that conditions will change over time and this plan must be flexible enough to accommodate those changes.

Although the City of Berkeley's population remained more or less stable between 1980 and 1990 changing from 103,350 to 102,724, the population in the census tracts analyzed (see census tract map) increased from 25,989 in 1980 to 26,227 in 1990. The household size in the census tract area also increased from 1.98 in 1980 to 2.02 in 1990, which is still smaller than the household size city-wide which decreased from 2.11 in 1980 to 2.10 in 1990. Median income in the census tract area in 1980 was 80 percent of the city-wide median income and in 1990 had increased slightly to 81 percent. Median incomes of all households in the study area census tracts in 1990 were \$24,000 or 64% of Alameda County area median incomes (AMI). However, the median incomes of households in the census tract area were only 54% of county incomes for 2-person families and 48% of county median incomes for 3-person families. Although home values and median contract rents are lower in the census tract area than city-wide, between 1980 and 1990 they increased at a similar rate to the rest of the city. The income and home value data indicate that the Census Tract Area is not in distress, but is rather a relatively stable neighborhood. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that conditions in the study area may not be as positive as in the larger Census Tracts area. Unfortunately, income and home value data is not maintained for the study area.

An assessment of the residential, hotel/motel, retail, and office real estate market was prepared based on qualitative information gathered from key informants, including real estate brokers, developers, merchants, landowners, and residents in the area.

The *residential* market in the study area varies according to product type. The overlap in prices between single-family sales (resale) and new condominium units suggests that planned condominium units within the area face a competitive disadvantage with respect to their pricing. In 1994, for example, the median single-family sales price within the study area was \$174,000 for two and three bedroom units, compared to condominium sales prices city-wide which range from \$179,000 to \$220,000 for two bedroom units. There is no clear consensus regarding the state of the market for new, for-sale, moderately priced live/work units. However, performance of the most recently constructed project, near the study area, at prices ranging from \$127,000 to \$185,000, has been sluggish. Proforma analysis of typical residential and mixed-use building types indicate, though, that with careful design, new multistory condominiums that fit within this price range could be built within the study area. Therefore, if the market improves for competitively priced condominiums, the University Avenue area could attract this kind of development.

Hotel/Motel uses on University Avenue receive much of their business due to location and recognition. Occupancy rates for 1994 vary substantially from 33 percent to 95 percent. Many of these businesses have owned their property for quite some time and are unlikely to leave the area in the near term.

Demand for *retail* space in Berkeley stems largely from tenants who are already doing business in, or are familiar with Berkeley. However, University Avenue, unlike the rest of the city, attracts interest from more regionally-oriented businesses as well as national franchises. Although there is a substantial amount of vacant retail space on University Avenue, much of it is small (1,000 to 5,000 square feet), constrained by outdated configurations, and/or within buildings that need substantial maintenance and repairs. With the exceptions of the Fourth Street and San Pablo Avenue districts, most of the retail space along University Avenue is spread out, rather than concentrated in easily identifiable destinations. Existing retail space on University Avenue commands between \$0.70 and \$1.40 gross, which is less than the downtown or Fourth Street area, which range from \$1.60 to

\$2.90 triple net. However, new space at the corner of San Pablo and University Avenue will command between \$1.90 and \$2.10 triple net.

Recent demand for retail space has been strongest in the San Pablo/University Avenue node, where most of the new stores have been regional or national chains. Sluggish leasing activity in other parts of the University Avenue corridor indicate that retail demand is soft. Although much of the existing retail space being activity marketed now will lease up over time, it is likely that changing retail conditions within the entire East Bay trade area will continue to create strong competition for this location. Given Berkeley's success at supporting small businesses, an opportunity exists along University Avenue to create a retail environment that is distinctly different

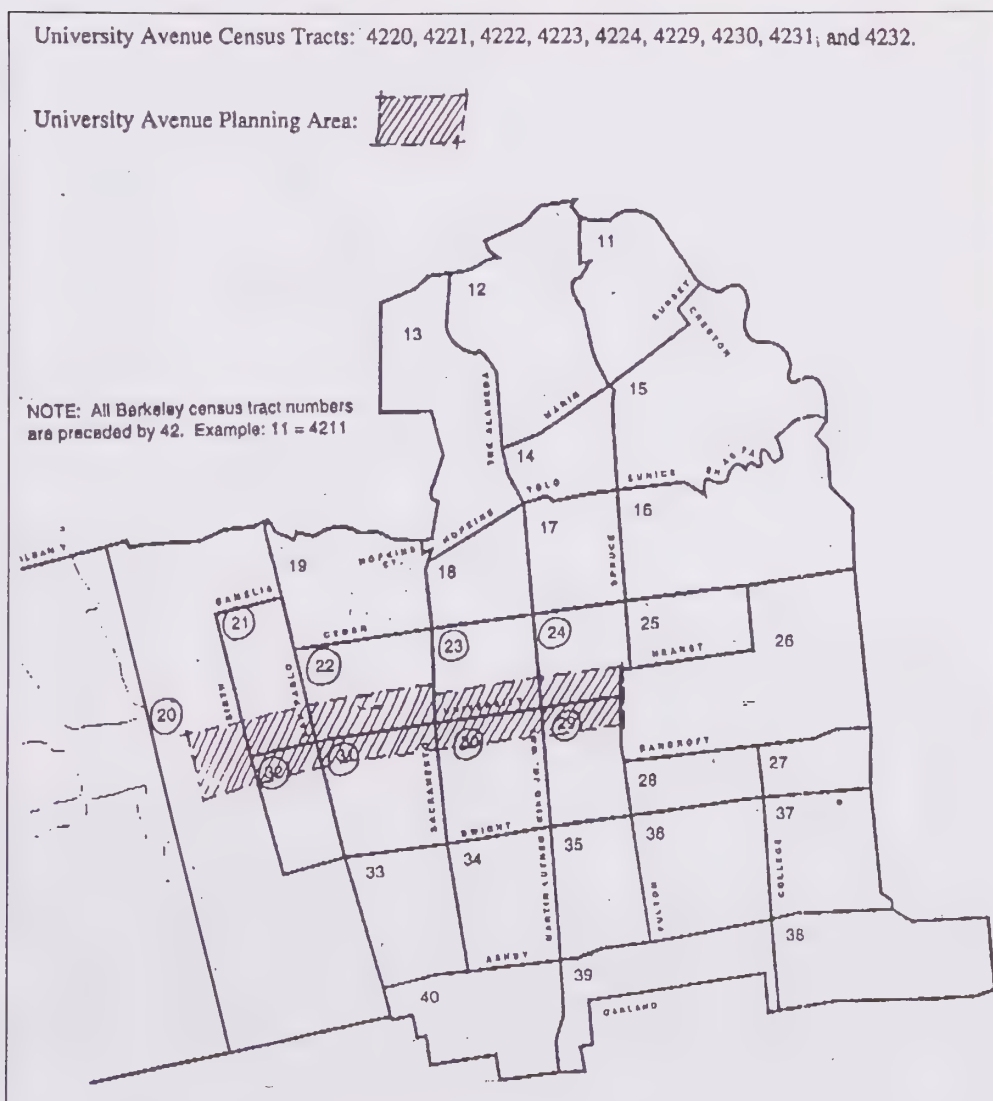


Demand for retail space in Berkeley stems largely from tenants who are already doing business in, or are familiar with Berkeley. Although there is a substantial amount of vacant retail space on University Avenue, much of it is constrained by space availability.

from auto-oriented malls and superstores. Clustering retail into easily identifiable nodes, that allow shoppers to frequent several businesses at one time, would be an important component to this strategy.

Based on the characteristics of the *office* market in Berkeley, which is concentrated in three major nodes in Downtown, West Berkeley, and the Alta Bates neighborhood, there appears to be limited immediate potential for office space on University Avenue west of MLK Way in the near term. However, if retail along the Avenue coalesced into activity nodes, then small-scale professional office space may become more viable, particularly within walking distance of either the Downtown or North Berkeley BART station.

Source: City of Berkeley
Prepared by Bay Area Economics



Public Safety

Setting and Issues

Public safety and the fear of crime along the University Avenue corridor has been the number one priority of this community since the beginning of the planning process. The University Avenue community had been insistent that prior to the discussion of any other issues, public safety had to be reviewed, discussed and acted upon.

A number of specific issues were identified as part of the overall concern about public safety, the first of which was an expressed need for *increased police presence*. The Police Department's recently adopted community policing approach will be an effective tool to implement the public safety improvements of the University Avenue plan.

Community policing is based, in part, on increased daily contact with the community, usually by foot or bicycle patrol. The other primary component is developing a problem solving approach to crime in partnership with the community. Both of these elements have been reviewed, discussed by the community, and adopted as part of the Strategic Plan process. In the 1994-95 City budget, the City Council increased the Police Department budget significantly. One additional foot patrol officer and 2.5 additional bicycle patrol officers were added to the University and San Pablo area.

Physical maintenance was an issue identified as having an impact on the community's sense of security and perception of public safety. The proliferation of graffiti and litter were specific concerns that surfaced early in the process, and were addressed in the short-term through concerted clean-up days and the location of additional trash cans along the corridor. In the long-term, joint clean-up efforts might be formalized and combined with periodic public safety audits to determine where other maintenance related improvements affecting public safety could be needed.

The community is also concerned with achieving improved communication with the police department including *obtaining and maintaining crime statistics*. In the past there were difficulties and complications in obtaining data, due to the fact that many of the statistics were still being recorded manually and the study area stretches across six census tracts.

The *prevalence of liquor stores* in the area and the permitted sale of fortified beer and wine have been identified by the community as public safety issues. Because the State regulates the license of liquor sales, the City currently has limited control over the location and regulation of liquor sales outlets. Nevertheless, the City is in the process of developing a city-wide strategy for addressing public safety and nuisance problems related to alcohol outlets and the sale of fortified liquor. This strategy involves legislative action, enforcement, and prevention planning.

The *design of physical improvements*, although not specifically identified by the community as a critical public safety issue, has the potential to significantly improve the conditions and perception of safety throughout the corridor. Design considerations affecting public safety can be divided into categories: the awareness of the environment, visibility, and finding help.

Awareness of the environment relates to designing public space that is understandable to the pedestrian. Design features such as pedestrian-scaled lighting, clear sight lines, and the elimination of entrapment spots can significantly change the real and perceived safety in the area.

Increasing the visibility of activities taking place in the public areas by all members of the community promotes safety and a sense of comfort. Visibility is affected by the number of people who are available to “look out” on the street. Defining the appropriate mix and intensity of land uses for the area can provide “eyes on the street” at all times of the day and night.

Finally, improving the *ability to locate assistance* and help promptly can enhance a person’s sense of security. For example, the community identified a specific need for additional public phones to be located on University Avenue. Other design features that could be considered include clearly

demarcating exit, alarm, and telephone locations, as well as maintaining clear passageways that allow easy access and movement throughout the area.

Crime Data

Newly obtained 1995 crime data for the University Avenue Strategic Plan area has recently been developed through the use of a Geographic Information System (GIS) software program. This program allows the user to aggregate crime data according to specific geographic boundaries, such as each of the four Plan Sub Areas, the Plan area as a whole, and for comparative purposes, similar commercial corridors within the City.

The data for this analysis is drawn from the Berkeley Police Department’s Records Management System for 1995 and is aggregated into two classifications: “Crimes Against Persons” including murder, rape, robbery (by force or threat) and assault, and “Crimes Against Property” including burglary, theft, car theft, etc. Crimes are identified by address but, given the limitations of the program at this time, each incidence is plotted (or “geocoded”) by city block rather than individual parcel.¹⁰

Incidence of Crime
City-wide vs. Plan Area

	Citywide	Plan Area	% Citywide
<i>Population</i>	102,718	7,712	8%
<i>Total Crimes</i>	6,947	1,066	15%
<i>Crimes Against Persons</i>	2,317	440	19%
<i>Crimes Against Property</i>	4,630	626	14%

Plan Area

Out of the 6,947 crimes plotted city-wide, 1,066 occur within the University Avenue Plan area, or approximately 15% of all crimes in the City. Out of the 1,066 crimes committed in the Plan area, 626 are defined as "Crimes Against Property" while 440 come under the category of "Crimes Against Persons". The figures for the Plan area compared to the city-wide

total for crimes against persons and property respectively are: city-wide "Crimes Against Persons" = 2,317, vs. the Plan area = 440 (19%); city-wide "Crimes Against Property" = 4,630, Plan area = 626 (14%).

A comparison using crime and resident population can be useful in comparing cities to each other because, at least in theory, cities have a comparable mix of characteristics or land uses (e.g. commercial, residential,



1995 Total Crime Density by Block

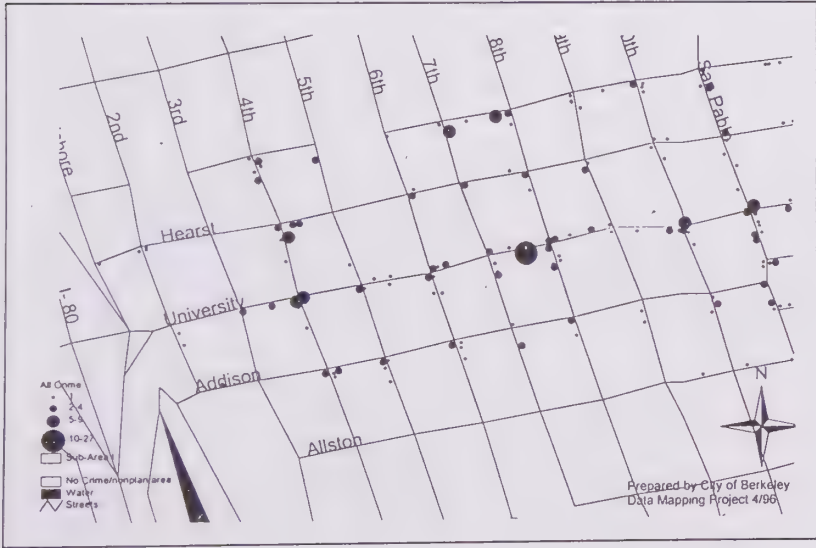
industrial and parks). Between areas of different land uses within a particular city however, a comparison is generally meaningless since the lesser populated but more heavily traveled commercial areas frequently have higher absolute crime figures than a more densely populated neighborhood.

Using crime per 1,000 resident figures for comparison shows, for instance, that crime (as defined here) in the City of Berkeley stood at 67 per 1,000 residents for 1995. In Sub-Area 4 of the Plan area (Downtown) it

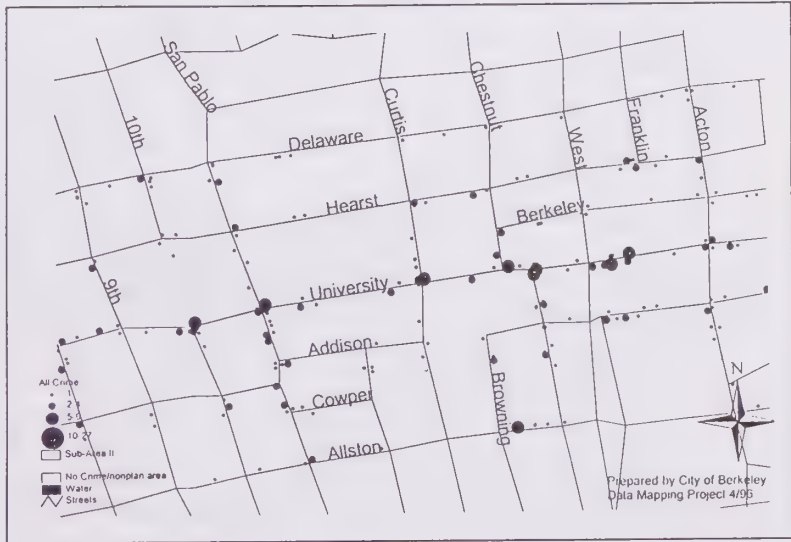
stood at 328 per thousand. While there is certainly more crime in the Downtown than in other areas, the relative lack of residential population in the Downtown drives the figure up disproportionately. For instance, Sub-Area 3 has a rate of 68 incidents per thousand residents or 20% of the 328 per thousand ration found in Sub-Area 4. However, the actual number of crimes in Sub-Area 3 is 168, or 40% of the actual 419 crimes in the Downtown. The point being, one must be careful with these types of data comparisons as they can be interpreted in several ways.

Total 1995 Crime Occurrences by Location

Sub-Area 1



Sub-Area 2



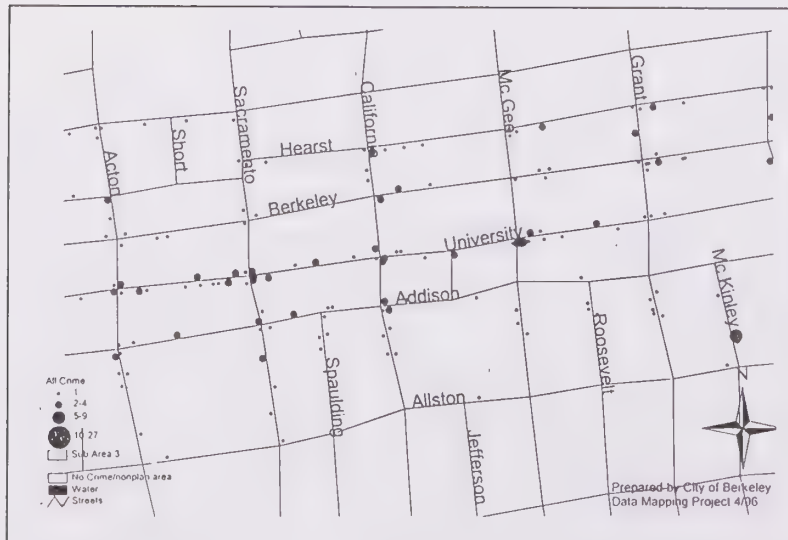
Sub-Areas

Crime is unevenly distributed in the Plan area with concentrations along the corridor vs. the surrounding residential areas. There is also a much higher concentration in the Downtown, as Sub-Area 4 accounts for 39% of total crime vs. Sub-Area 3 which accounts for 16%. Since crime requires: a) favorable location, b) criminals, and c) victims, it is reasonable to expect the higher density of potential victims (e.g. pedestrians in the Downtown area) to correlate with higher numbers of crimes.

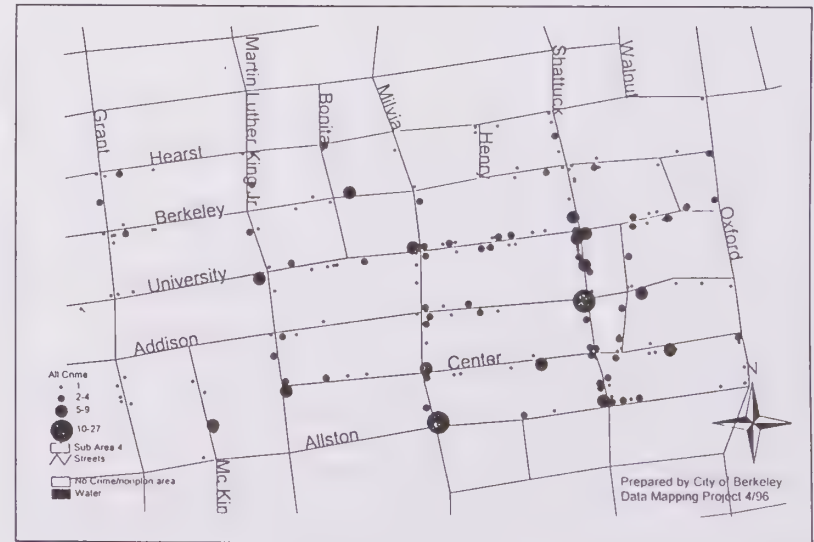
Incidence of Crime Sub-Area Comparisons

	<i>All Crime</i>	<i>% Plan Area</i>	<i>Crime v. Persons</i>	<i>% Plan Area</i>	<i>Crime v. Property</i>	<i>% Plan Area</i>
<i>Sub-Area 1</i>	229	22%	81	18%	148	24%
<i>Sub-Area 2</i>	250	23%	113	26%	137	22%
<i>Sub-Area 3</i>	168	16%	59	13%	109	17%
<i>Sub-Area 4</i>	419	39%	187	43%	232	37%
<i>Plan Area</i>	1066	100%	440	100%	626	100%

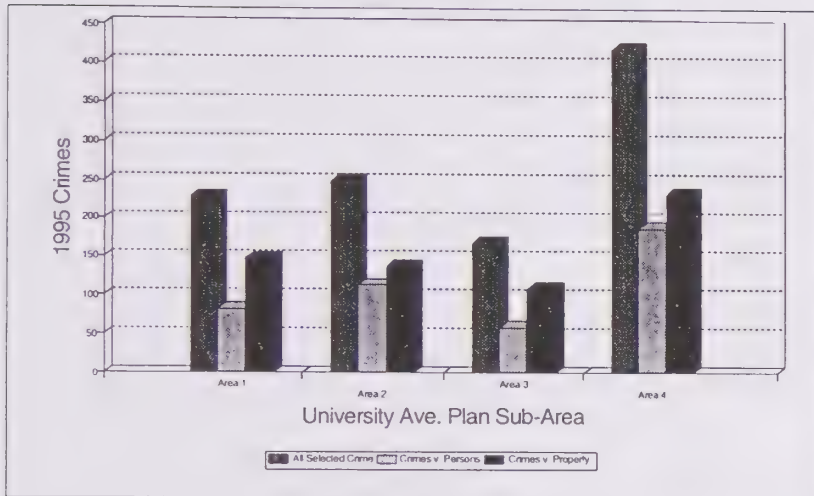
Sub-Area 3



Sub-Area 4



PERSON/PROPERTY AND TOTAL CRIMES Sub-Area Comparison



Commercial Corridors

While a comparison of only the various commercial areas using a ratio of crime to land area suffers from the fact that some commercial areas are more heavily used than others and data is not available to correct for those discrepancies, it may nonetheless be the most valuable type of comparison. The attached charts and tables on comparative crime rates in the commercial corridors were prepared as follows. 1995 crime data was plotted along the following corridors:

- Telegraph Ave. (Bancroft to Oakland line)
- San Pablo (Albany to Oakland)
- Shattuck (Rose to the Ward St. split with Adeline)
- College (from Stuart to Alcatraz)
- Solano (from the Albany line to the Alameda)
- University (from Eastshore to the Campus)

Incidence of Crime Commercial Corridor Comparison (Crime per Linear Foot of Corridor)

	Avenue	Avenue and Neighborhood	Neighborhood
Shattuck Ave.	3.88	9.17	5.29
Telegraph Ave.	3.78	10.46	6.68
University Ave.	3.37	9.33	5.96
College Ave.	2.06	4.48	2.41
San Pablo Ave.	0.97	4.37	3.40
Solano Ave.	1.19	2.04	0.85

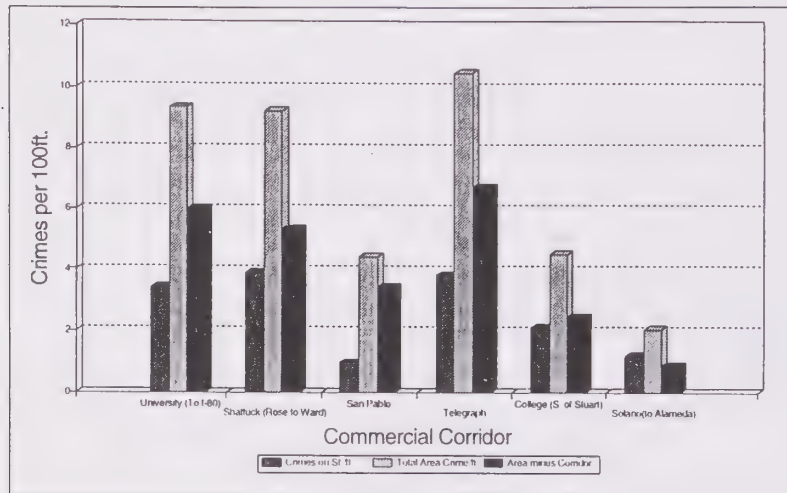
Crimes were plotted in three categories:

1. **Avenue:** All crime occurring in the commercial corridor, then adjusted by the approximate length of the avenue (accurate to within about 100 feet) to produce a number of crimes per 100 linear feet of commercial corridor.

2. **Avenue and Neighborhood:** All crime occurring within an 850 foot band on either side of the commercial corridor and including crime in that corridor - then adjusted to produce a number of crimes per 100 linear feet of commercial corridor extending 850 ft. on either side.

3. **Neighborhood:** The crime figures for the 850 foot range including the corridors was adjusted by removing the crime in the commercial corridor itself - thereby producing a "neighborhood" crime figure per 100 linear feet of commercial corridor.

CRIME IN THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS
(Crimes per 100 ft of Street)



This is obviously a less than perfect comparative model but it is the best available at present. Illustrating the limitations of such comparisons is the fact that San Pablo Avenue shows the lowest crime of all commercial corridors in the City - in spite of periodic problems with prostitution, a heavy share of bars and liquor outlets etc. The fact that there is relatively little foot traffic (removing potential victims from the necessary triad of victim/location/perpetrator that characterize all crime) is a likely explanation.

Public Safety Policies and Strategies

POLICY 1: MAINTAIN A VISIBLE AND COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICE PRESENCE ALONG UNIVERSITY AVENUE.

Strategy 1A: Emphasize the use of bicycle and foot patrols.

Strategy 1B: Encourage community-policing principles, particularly ensuring that police officers are given a regular beat in the area and can become knowledgeable and engaged about the community.

POLICY 2: PROMOTE PUBLIC SAFETY PROBLEM SOLVING.

Strategy 2A: In recognition that improved public safety continues to be the highest priority for the University Avenue community, a comprehensive Public Safety Program be developed with the explicit goal of reducing crime and improving public safety. This program should commence with a thorough study of how such improvements can be accomplished.

Strategy 2B: Conduct regular meetings between police, merchants, residents and property owners.

Strategy 2C: Encourage the formation of merchant and neighborhood groups where none exist to further crime prevention efforts.

Strategy 2D: Solicit input from those most at risk of being directly affected by crime: women, racial and ethnic minorities, the elderly and the poor.

POLICY 3: IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN THE APPEARANCE AND FUNCTION OF THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORRIDOR.

Strategy 3A: Develop a targeted graffiti and litter removal program between the merchants and the Public Works Department.

Strategy 3B: Develop safety audits, to be conducted by the Police Department, to assess commercial buildings and neighborhood districts.

Strategy 3C: Develop a legible public sign program, e.g. to locate phones, finding help, washrooms, transit routes and schedules, and to report maintenance or vandalism problems.

POLICY 4: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN CRIME STATISTICS AND IDENTIFY HOT SPOTS WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORRIDOR.

Strategy 4A: The Crime Analysis Unit should develop and maintain a more focused set of crime data for the University Avenue corridor. The Crime Analysis Unit should also work with the University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission to educate the community as to how crime statistics are maintained, the types of calls for service, trends and the limitations of the data. Ultimately, the greatest value of the analytical capacities contained in GIS systems lie not in the ability to compare or to prove any particular point but in the ability to clearly analyze and identify characteristics that policy makers do and do not like and to benchmark those characteristics in an overall plan for their improvement.

Strategy 4B: Continue to link crime data to electronic maps of the corridor to produce current crime density maps. Improved software and more complete data will allow the City to plot specific parcel usage, look at areas surrounding those specific parcels and make even more of an “apples to apples” comparison than is possible at this time.

POLICY 5: ALL IMPROVEMENTS ALONG THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORRIDOR SHALL BE DESIGNED TO CONSCIOUSLY PROMOTE THE SAFETY OF INTENDED USERS AND THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD.

Strategy 5A: Develop a set of public safety criteria to address design issues such as: compatible mixed uses, natural surveillance, pedestrian lighting, public phones, ATMs, bus shelters and crosswalks; consult actual or potential users if possible.

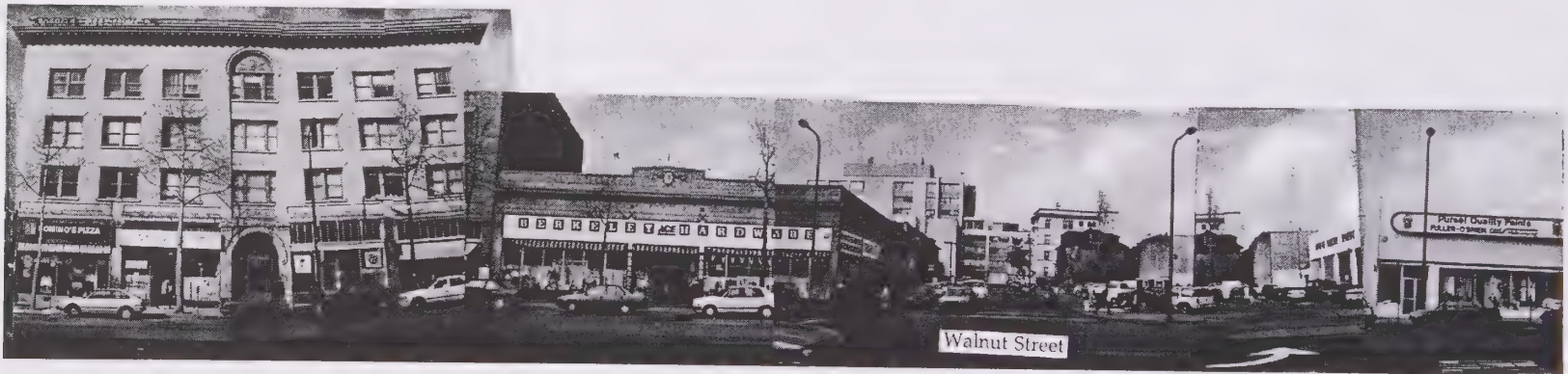
Strategy 5B: Establish police review for all projects which must comply with public safety design criteria.

Strategy 5C: Maintain records of how safety concerns were dealt with in order to develop a knowledge base.

Land Use Framework

Setting and Issues

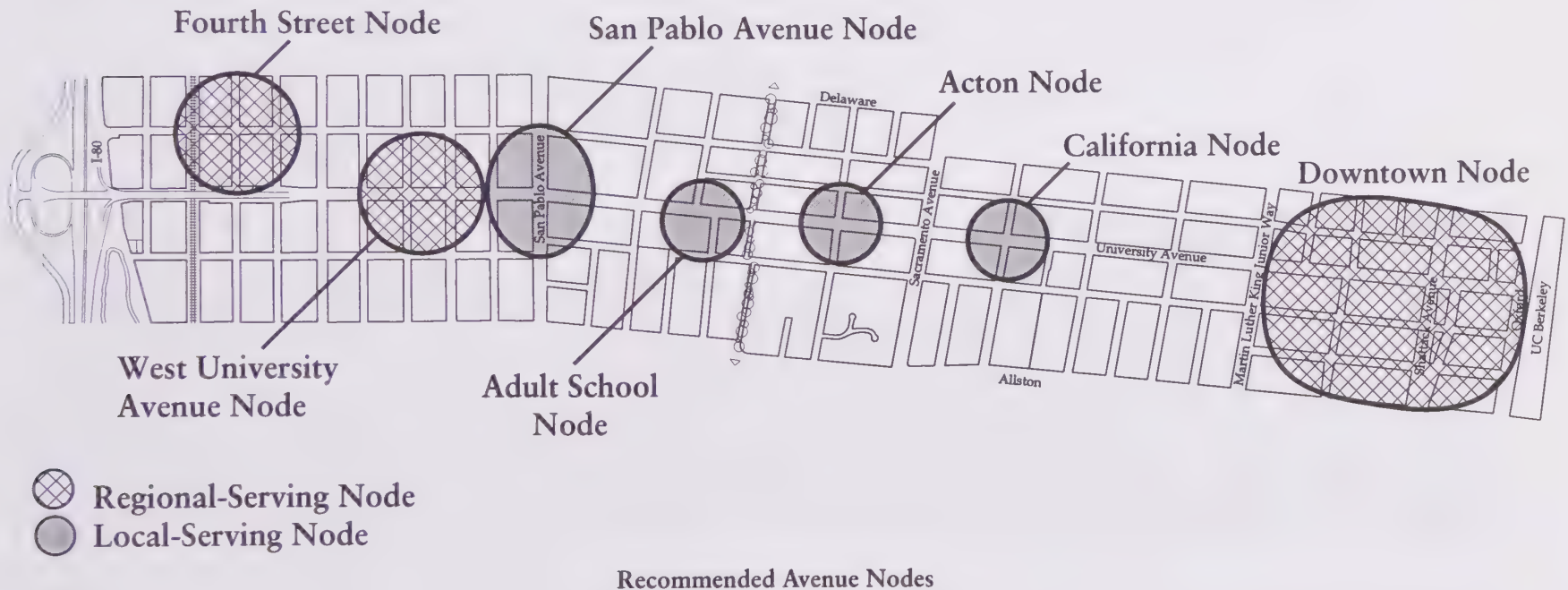
University Avenue is both local- and regional-serving. People come to the Avenue by car and transit, as well as by bicycle and on foot. At certain locations on University Avenue, such as from Shattuck to Martin Luther King Jr. Way and along San Pablo Avenue, people frequent the street, taking advantage of the services, shops and restaurants located at these key destinations. However, despite the abundance of pedestrian activity that occurs in select locations, most residents feel University Avenue is a street designed for the automobile and is generally unsafe for pedestrians. In fact in 1966, the sidewalks and medians along the Avenue were narrowed to add capacity for the car and freeway scale street lights were installed. Once these changes took place, a ripple effect occurred: local-serving businesses began to sell out to franchises and auto-oriented services, neighborhoods turned inward and away from the Avenue, and speeding cars and trucks drove pedestrians away. It is the goal of this Plan to both enhance the pedestrian experience as well as the overall physical appearance of the street, without adversely affecting and in fact improving the efficient movement of automobile traffic.



On this small segment of University Avenue one can see the difference between the historical development pattern, which (on the left) fronts the street edge, and the more auto-oriented ones, which (on the right) allow parking in the front.

There are many similar streets in other urban communities: wide, fast moving through-ways, dotted with auto-oriented businesses and underutilized commercial spaces, adjacent to established residential neighborhoods. The typical approach would be to call for a single “boulevard” treatment and emphasize the street’s commonalities. But the historic development patterns along University Avenue calls for a different approach. In fact, a closer look shows that the Avenue already functions as a series of “sub-areas,” each with a distinct character and purpose. This Strategic Plan calls for maintaining and enhancing these differences and perhaps more importantly, working toward bridging the physical barrier (the “virtual moat”) that the street itself represents.

University Avenue is anchored by two regional centers: Downtown Berkeley and West Berkeley. In many ways these areas are the most successful shopping districts along the Avenue. West Berkeley is actually defined by two commercial nodes. The Fourth Street area contains a mix of specialty retail, outlet stores, and small professional office spaces. Nearby, along the western end of University, there is a grouping of Indian merchants, selling a variety of clothing, jewelry, food, and household items. Both parts of this West Berkeley center, though different in many ways, form a critical mass of businesses that draw patrons from throughout the region. Downtown Berkeley forms the eastern anchor of University Avenue. Its mix of office, commercial, and entertainment uses, along with its



proximity to the U.C. campus, make it an important regional destination and the reason why University Avenue is a major thoroughfare. If anything is missing from these areas it is a viable residential component. Particularly in the downtown, new housing would create an around-the-clock atmosphere that is lacking today.

While the rest of the Avenue contains a few successful establishments, they are isolated from one another, preventing the gradual evolution to a critical mass of commercial activity. With the exception of San Pablo Avenue, where there is a healthy mix of local-serving shops and services catering to the needs of surrounding residents, the rest of the street contains a haphazard mix of auto-related services, a scattering of local-serving businesses, and a few national chain stores. Many commercial storefronts are underutilized and not well maintained, visually giving the area a poor appearance. While some neighbors have local-serving commercial uses nearby, others must drive to buy fresh produce or take care of daily errands.

West Campus, formerly part of Berkeley High School, is the largest single use within the University Avenue corridor. The site occupies close to two blocks of the central part of this sub-area. 10,000 or so students attend the Adult Education Center and approximately half of the students come from the Berkeley community. The school uses all of their 42 classrooms, but several of the older buildings on the site are unsafe and in need of substantial repairs. The West Campus Adult Education Center is a significant neighborhood asset that also generates customers for local businesses. Many nearby residents expressed an interest in working with the Adult School to make it more accessible to the surrounding community, while maintaining its primary mission as an educational facility (see also Sub-Area 2 discussion).

Current zoning treats all of University Avenue as a single place and permits a very broad range of uses. This policy framework fundamentally works against many of the goals of the Strategic Plan. Like other commercial corridors in Berkeley, a more tailored set of zoning standards is necessary to foster a safer and more diverse place. Thus, the land use strategy for revitalizing University Avenue recommends establishing a new zoning overlay designation that:

- Creates mixed-use “nodes” that are within walking distance of nearby residential areas and provide local-serving goods and services. These nodes will be the primary target sites for new commercial and residential mixed-use buildings, helping to focus investment in ways that make a difference to the area’s quality of life. Incentives are provided for reduced parking and open space to encourage mixed-use development in these sites.
- Respects the differences between neighborhoods and creates a distinct identity for each node. This approach recognizes that some nodes are primarily region-serving and others are oriented to the nearby neighborhoods.
- Much of the Avenue is lined with low density, underutilized commercial space. A gradual transition to mixed-use will help make the commercial that is present economically strong. Thus, the plan encourages housing with ground floor retail or office as a priority along the Avenue between commercial nodes. Allowances are provided for upper story live-work and offices. Ground floor retail is required, unless a hardship can be demonstrated. Wheelchair accessible units are encouraged at the side or rear of the ground floor. Building heights are limited to a maximum of three stories.

Zoning Overlay Recommendations

Avenue Nodes: Most of the length of University Avenue is currently zoned C-1, which permits a mix of commercial, office, and residential uses within an envelope of three and four story street-edge buildings. Though on the surface this seems to be consistent with the overall intent of the Strategic Plan to strengthen the mixed-use nature of the corridor, market conditions along the Avenue have taken advantage of the broad variety of commercial uses that the C-1 district permits. In reality, many newer buildings are one-story, auto-oriented commercial uses, such as fast-food or auto-repair. Retail uses are scattered, not concentrated, along the Avenue. There is also a substantial amount of vacant retail space on the Avenue. If University Avenue is to gradually transition to a street defined by both local- and region-serving mixed-use nodes, as well as a healthy component of urban housing, then new retail activity and small-scale offices should be concentrated in the high density, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented nodes, rather than dissipated throughout the corridor.

As described earlier, University Avenue currently functions as a series of “sub-areas,” each with a different character. Some are region-serving others are or could be local-serving. The future strength of the Avenue depends, in part, on recognizing these differences and enhancing their commercial viability. Thus, two types of Avenue Nodes are recommended: Region-Serving and Neighborhood-Serving.

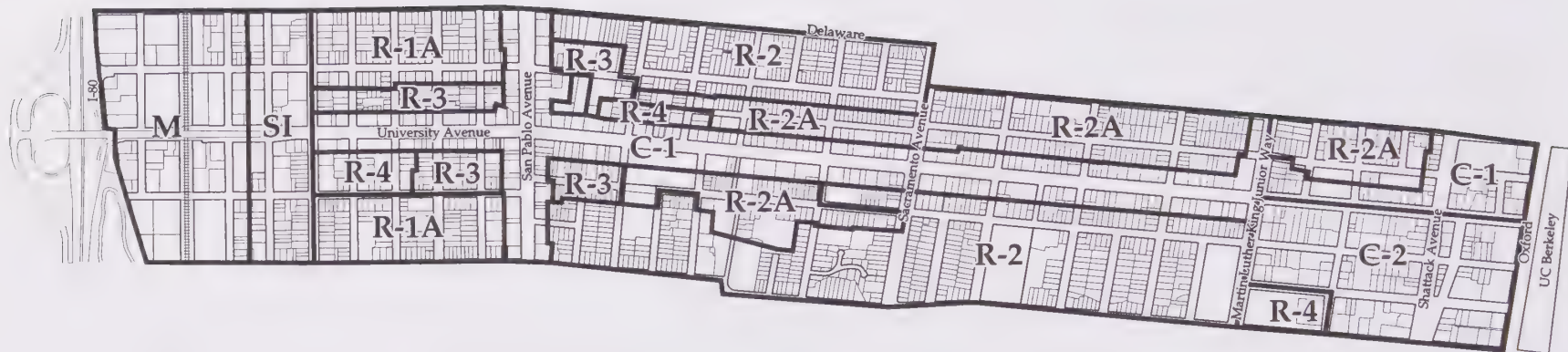
The seven Avenue Nodes recommended by this plan are as follows: 1) Fourth Street in West Berkeley, 2) West University Avenue, 3) San Pablo Avenue, 4) University Avenue at the Adult School, 5) University at Acton Street, 6) University at California Street and 7) Downtown. See the Avenue Nodes map for the locations of these nodes.

Fourth Street - North of University in West Berkeley is Fourth Street, a thriving mixed-use shopping district which is anchored to the south by Spenger’s Restaurant and extends to the north with small shops and offices. This mix of restaurants, boutiques, and businesses draws from a regional clientele. The pedestrian orientation, the abundance of parking, and proximity to the freeway make this area a prime shopping destination. Interspersed among these shops and offices are a number of live/work spaces for local artists. For more information on Fourth Street, also see the “West Berkeley Plan.”

West University Avenue - University Avenue east of Seventh Street contains a concentration of small Indian shops and businesses. These shops draw clients from all over the Bay Area. Future efforts should focus on maintaining and enhancing the diversity of shops and services in this area.

San Pablo Avenue - This street has recently experienced something of a renaissance. There is a wide variety of stores and businesses along San Pablo, including local-serving convenience shops, small restaurants and cafes, a bank, post office, discount households supplies, a drug store, liquor store, car repair, and other auto-related services. This tree-lined avenue is both pedestrian-oriented in its fine-grained scale and a major auto/transit thoroughfare. Most older buildings come to the street edge and create a strong pedestrian environment. New uses and buildings should protect and enhance the positive aspects of this area.

West Campus Adult School - This existing facility should be protected, renovated and made more available to residents of the broader community. With this in mind, the City should work with the School District to jointly prepare a Master Plan for the site and plan to make this facility a state-of-the art adult education and recreation center.



Existing Zoning Designations

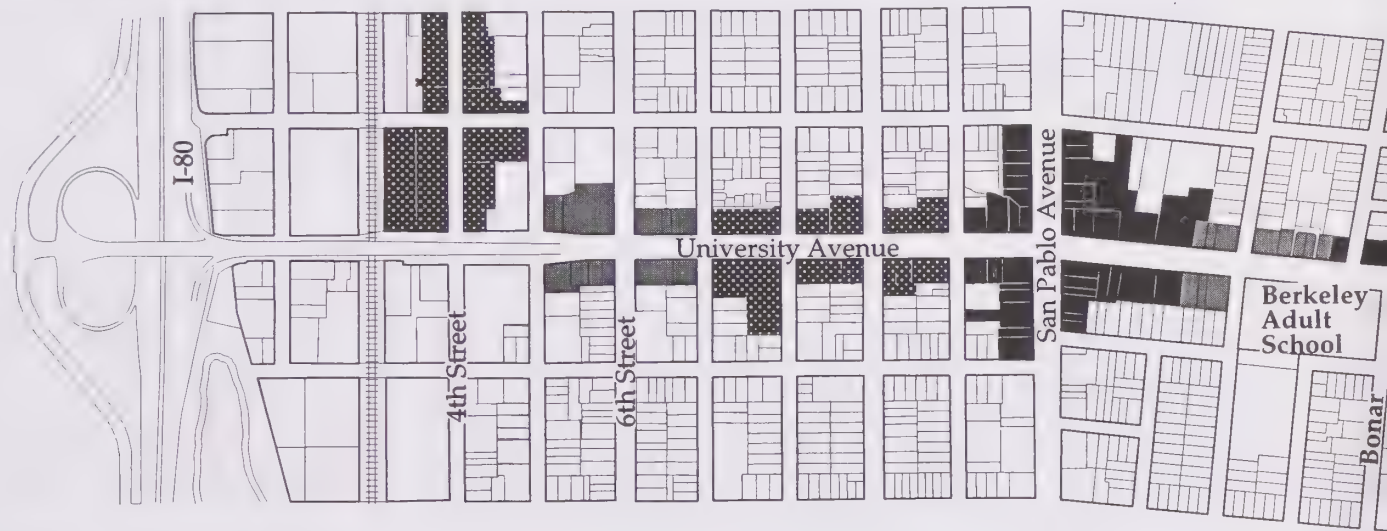
University at Acton Street - Andronico's supermarket at University and Acton functions as this Node's primary destination. Its success demonstrates the feasibility of local-serving shopping along University Avenue, although the store probably draws from a much larger market area. Its design also works with the neighborhood, in that auto and pedestrian access is provided from both the Avenue and from Addison, allowing neighbors to easily walk or drive to the store without having to get onto University. The Acton Street Node presents a major opportunity along the University Avenue Corridor and is within walking distance of the North Berkeley BART station. One parcel, a State-owned health facility, is potentially available to the City as surplus property. The Employment Development Department is planning to move out of the area within the next year and

may become a second opportunity site. In the future, other sites within this node may also be placed on the market for new development. The Acton Street node should be made a top priority for the development of new housing targeted to a mix of incomes and a priority location for completion of the University Avenue streetscape improvements.

University at California Street - California Street, though the smallest and least developed of the Avenue Nodes, has a number of small businesses, cafes, and higher intensity mixed-use buildings. It currently serves as a neighborhood-oriented destination. There are several vacant buildings, which once developed will play a role in making this Node into a thriving, active pedestrian-oriented "place to be."

Downtown - The heart of Berkeley feeds the City with students, employees, and store customers. Most of Berkeley's office buildings and civic buildings, such as City Hall, the Library, Berkeley High School and the Courthouse, are located Downtown. BART, the entrance to UC Berkeley, and the Arts District are also located here. Every effort should be made to enhance and renovate buildings in the block between Milvia and Shattuck (see Immediate Action Items) and to encourage additional housing in the downtown area. See also the "Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines" and the "Downtown Berkeley Public Improvements Plan."

During the University Avenue Subcommittee of the Planning Commission policy discussions, illustrative prototype projects were used to analyze the conditions that would encourage mixed-use and residential development in the study area. What was discovered is that the zoning requirements for mixed-use development in the study area are currently based on zoning requirements imposed in primarily residential or primarily commercial neighborhoods, not mixed-use transit corridors. Requirements, such as parking standards for new and existing retail space and open space standards for residential units, can create a significant barriers to building new



LEGEND

- Local-Serving Avenue Nodes
- Region-Serving Avenue Nodes
- Avenue Residential
- Neighborhood Residential

Recommended Zoning Overlay Designations

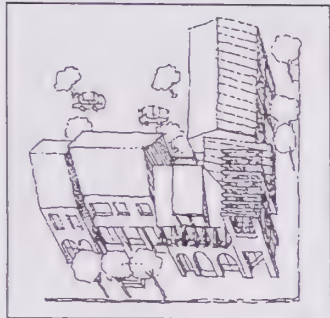
mixed-use developments if they don't take into consideration the desired physical character of the area. Alternative standards should be established for University Avenue that facilitate carefully planned and designed new development within the corridor.

Avenue Mixed-Use: Urban housing and live-work are seen as a key components to a revitalized University Avenue. New residents will become patrons for local businesses and help bolster the level of activity along the street. Further, as mentioned by the City's "Avenues Plan," Uni-

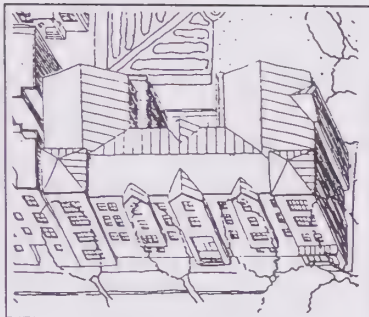
versity Avenue as well as Shattuck, Telegraph, and MLK Jr. Way are important transit routes within the city, and thus appropriate locations for higher density living. Nurturing opportunities for live-work is also consistent with the intent to improve the economic vitality of the study area. Live-work provides an affordable alternative for artists and small business persons and can be managed so traffic, noise, and other environmental impacts are avoided. To ensure that the street edge is active, ground-floor retail and small-scale offices are permitted in ground floor locations, unless a financial hardship can be demonstrated.



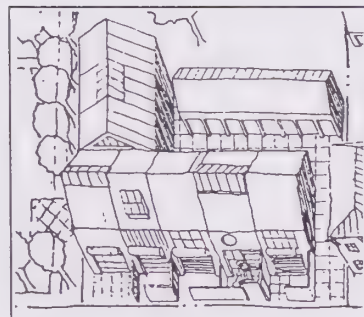
Building Types



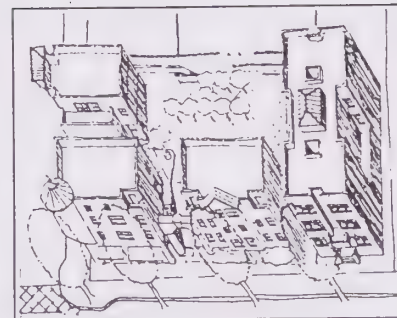
Corner Retail



Avenue Residential



Live-Work



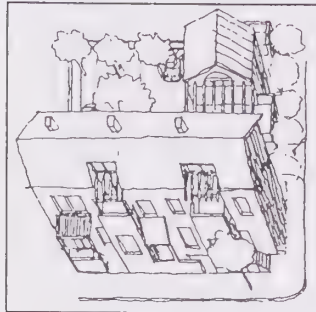
Mixed-Use

Design Guidelines: Projects along the corridor should be encouraged to provide pedestrian-friendly uses at ground level, helping to activate and provide “eyes on the street.” Minimum and maximum building heights should be established to reinforce the Avenue Nodes concept and provide incentives for developers to build new mixed-use buildings.¹¹ Massing standards should address solar access and privacy issues. As described further in the Urban Design section, a series of design guidelines have been proposed that guide development into physical patterns that achieve these and other goals. The specifics of the University Avenue Design Guidelines should be incorporated into the new Zoning Overlay designation.

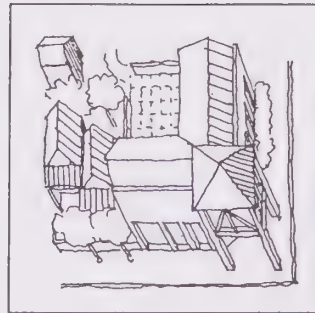
Permitted Uses: As mentioned earlier, University Avenue is currently home to a number of liquor stores, auto-oriented uses, and industrial/warehousing uses that do not fit with the desired character and function of the corridor. Like other commercial corridors in Berkeley, the list of permitted uses along University Avenue should be tailored to discourage or prohibit activities that are not consistent with the intent of this plan.

Although University Avenue does command interest from franchise businesses, the greatest demand for retail space in Berkeley generally stems from tenants who are already doing business in or are familiar with Berkeley. The concern that new fast food franchises along University Avenue work against the goals of the Strategic Plan has, though, led to a current moratorium. Given the City’s mixed success with fast food franchise quotas, this plan is recommending that new franchises be limited through strict design controls. Many other communities have successfully established design standards that prohibit drive through take-out and corporate identity buildings, while encouraging a design attitude that fits with the fine-grain, mixed-use character of an area.

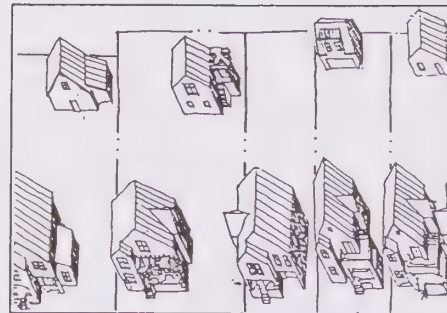
Contaminated Sites: These sites are regulated primarily by the State Regional Water Quality Control Board, which maintains a current listing and status of any contaminated parcel within the study area. This information is updated regularly and is available to the community over the Internet.



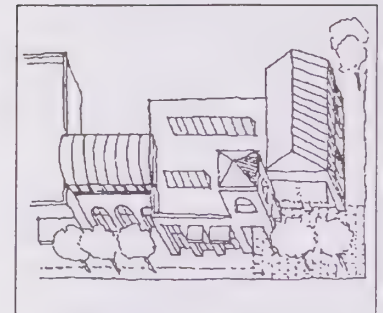
Townhouses



Day Care



Single-Family with Ancillary Units



Mixed-Use with Plaza

In response to concerns of pre-existing groundwater contamination within the study area, e.g. from gas stations, the City's Toxic Management Division has recommended several measures to strengthen existing regulations that deal with: sites with known pollution, sites with no known pollution, and for changes of use from a chemical using business to another.

Land Use Policies and Strategies

POLICY 6: STRENGTHEN UNIVERSITY AVENUE AS A MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL BOULEVARD. CONCENTRATE URBAN HIGH DENSITY MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE NODES ALONG THE AVENUE. ENCOURAGE LOWER DENSITY MIXED-USE OUTSIDE THE NODES. PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE LOWER DENSITY CHARACTER OF SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS.

Strategy 6A: Create a special Zoning Overlay Designation for University Avenue between San Pablo Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way that:

- Identifies the desired location of Neighborhood-Serving and Region-Serving Avenue Nodes. This overlay should address the physical appearance and density of new buildings, as well as the differences among neighborhood-serving and region-serving nodes.
- Encourages housing with ground floor retail or office as a priority along the Avenue between commercial nodes (Avenue Mixed-Use). Allowances are provided for upper story live-work and offices. Ground floor retail is required, unless a hardship can be demonstrated. Wheelchair accessible units are encouraged at the side or rear of the ground floor.
- Removes barriers to constructing relatively high density housing along University Avenue. Specifically, apply the open space and parking requirements for high density housing in a flexible manner, given the area's proximity to transit and nearby parks. Encourages the Zoning Adjustments Board to reduce the on-site open space requirement for mixed-use residential buildings from 200 s.f./unit to as low as 40 s.f./unit if proposed open space is of high quality, meeting a combination of the following: contiguous space;

southern exposure; planted; at grade public plaza. Encourages the Zoning Board of Adjustments to reduce parking requirements as necessary to encourage transit-oriented mixed-use development, where appropriate findings can be made.

- Sets minimum and maximum building height limits for residential, mixed-use, and commercial buildings within Avenue Nodes and Avenue Mixed-Use areas. New buildings in Avenue Nodes will be required to be a minimum of 2 stories in height, and a maximum of 4 stories. Buildings in Avenue Mixed-Use areas will be required to be at least 2 stories high and may be a maximum of 3 stories. These maximum heights may only be granted if all other solar, privacy, open space, signage, design, and parking standards are met.
- Incorporates the University Avenue Strategic Plan Design Guidelines (see also Urban Design section).
- Prohibits or discourages certain uses along University Avenue, such as new:
 - alcohol-related establishments (unless in conjunction with a restaurant)
 - pawn shops
 - adult-oriented businesses
 - automobile and other vehicle-oriented uses
 - drive-in food and services
 - industrial/warehouse uses.

Strategy 6B: Monitor the development of existing sites with pre-existing groundwater contamination.

- Sites with known pollution: Polluted sites need to be adequately investigated and pollution removed from the site prior to development. In some cases, the City of Berkeley Toxics Management

Division (TMD) can work with the developer to allow development where remediation is not complete. In such cases, remediation should in no way be impacted by the development. In addition, the developer needs to perform some form of risk analysis and long term management that is approved by the TMD.

- Sites with no known pollution: The TMD will be copied on any Phase One environmental assessment reports and any other additional environmental reports prior to any required sign-off for development.
- For change of use from a chemical using business to another: The TMD will require a site inspection and review of intended use prior to any required sign-off for development. Corrective actions may be necessary.

Strategy 6C: Study the concept of an expanded home occupation use city-wide.

- An earlier concept for a Transitional Zone between the commercial corridor and the residential neighborhoods has been removed from the plan. Despite opposition to a zoning designation that many felt categorized their neighborhood as “in-between,” there was support for expanding home occupation uses based on appropriate standards to mitigate any potential impact on the neighborhood. However, it was concluded that this would be more appropriately dealt with on a city-wide basis rather than just along University Avenue.

Urban Design

Setting and Issues

The urban design issues affecting University Avenue encompass a broad variety of topics: improving the functional and visual appearance of the street, appropriate approaches to infill, ensuring that disinvested properties are improved over time, calming traffic, providing pedestrian amenities, designing for personal safety, design and maintenance of public open spaces, and public art. Both the street and its buildings must be considered in order to create healthy and safe public spaces. Issues specific to the University Avenue Area include:

Lack of Gateway Markers – University Avenue is an important gateway to the city and the Downtown that deserves a statement of civic pride and community identity. This special symbol might include a structure, public art, and/or distinctive landscaping.

Aphid-Infested Street Trees - The Tulip Poplar trees that are currently planted along the length of University Avenue are infested with aphids. During warm weather the aphids produce a sticky substance that drips onto the sidewalk and parked cars. Local merchants are concerned that their businesses are affected by this problem and residents say that they don't like to walk under the trees on the sticky sidewalks. The problem could be treated by spraying pesticides annually, but the City has an ordinance which prohibits the use of pesticides. It might be possible to inject the trees with pesticides, but again this would be an annual process that would eventually severely damage the trees.

Poor Lighting - The existing lighting along the full length of University Avenue is designed for optimum performance of the automobile and for that it serves its purpose. But for the people who live and shop there it is too bright, high and unattractive. The City Council has also recently supported the concept of seasonal lighting, such as at the Indian New Year and Christmas time, to add a new level of festivity to University Avenue.



Many places lack the amenities that should be found on a pedestrian-oriented street. Buildings should frame streets and provide pleasant places to walk.

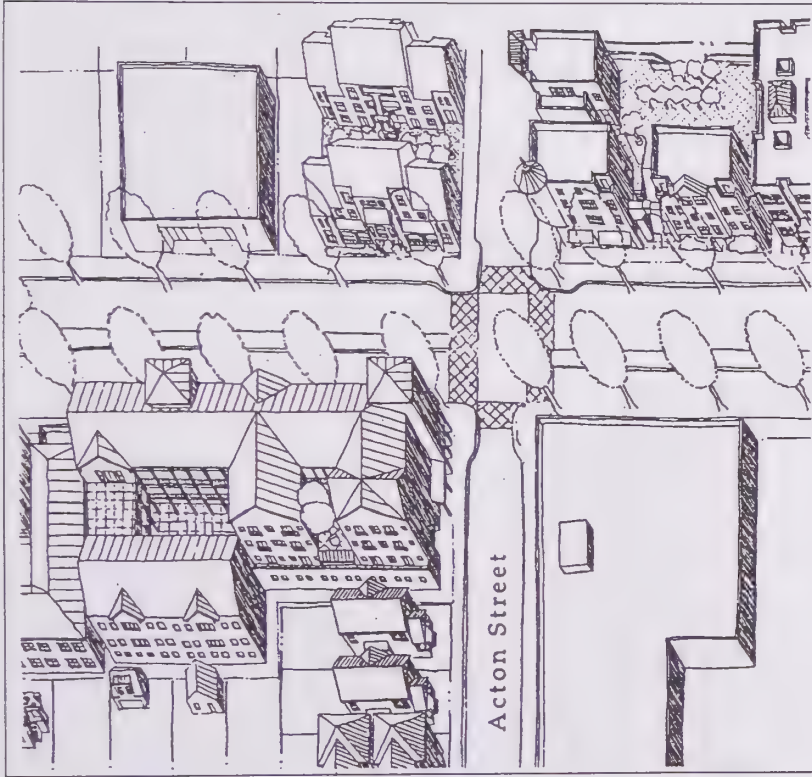


Cluttered Signage - Contributing to the unfriendly pedestrian environment is the lack of coherence among building signage along the Avenue. Many residents complained that the Sign Ordinance is either not effective enough or that it is not being enforced.

Billboards and Banners - While most residents feel that the existing billboards are intrusive and should be phased out, they do represent a

thriving commercial venture that may take considerable effort to remove. One form of signage, though, that all residents agreed would have a positive impact to the Avenue would be the hanging of banners on the existing flagpoles with greetings and information about Berkeley.

Disinvested and Seismically Damaged Buildings - While some of the buildings along University and San Pablo Avenues are of historical value



ACTON NODE

The State-owned health facility at the southwest corner of University and Acton will soon be offered as surplus property to the City. This site presents a tremendous opportunity to make the Acton node a reality. City control of this property is key to making this catalyst project a financial success. Key features of a new mixed-use development at this site include:

Land Use:	Mixed Income Housing Ground Floor Retail
Site Area:	24,000 s.f.
Residential:	40 to 45 units Mix of 1 and 2 bedrooms
Retail:	4,000 to 5,000 s.f.
Parking:	40 to 50 spaces 1 space/unit + min. retail parking
Open Space:	5,250 to 5,850 s.f. on-site Will meet or exceed 125 s.f./unit

Acton Node Illustrative

and contribute to the overall fine-grained character of the Avenues, many facades are rundown and need to be repaired and painted. Others are either seismically damaged or are unable to meet current seismic building codes. Disinvested commercial, motel, and housing properties create an impression that the University Avenue corridor is a dying commercial strip. Encouraging improvement, rehabilitation, and continued maintenance of all buildings in the study area is one of the most important concerns expressed by the community. However, there is also a clear desire expressed by the community, that the area's character and variety be maintained. Specifically, a facade improvement program should not result in a homogeneous, uninteresting environment. Improvements should focus on enhancing the pedestrian environment by providing amenities such as awnings, signage, and lighting. In addition, the "Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines" specifically address how to modify existing buildings and construct new ones in a manner which furthers the goals, objectives, and policies of the Historic Preservation and Urban Design Element of the "Downtown Plan."

Outdated Building Layouts – Many of the area's stores are located in older buildings not designed to accommodate modern methods of displaying merchandise. The outdated layout of older buildings could result in a variety of problems, including not enough display space and poor visibility for display windows. The City has two existing programs which could assist merchants to meet some of their needs, the City-wide Loan Fund (CFL) and the Facade Grant Program. Neither of the existing programs seem to fit the specific needs of University Avenue merchants. There is a need for a low-interest loan fund that would be effective in assisting existing small businesses to improve a store's layout, facade, signage, and accessibility to persons with disabilities without requiring that they generate new employment base for the city.

Traffic - The lack of a safe and pleasant pedestrian experience along the entire length of University Avenue is an issue that has come up over and over again in conversations with the community. Speeding cars and trucks, congestion at critical intersections, inconsistent left turn lanes, and the dominance of auto-oriented establishments that have large expanses of parking lots and numerous curb cuts are common criticisms.

Lack of Pedestrian Amenities - Most sidewalks along University are narrow, have broken pavement, and are inaccessible to many persons with disabilities. Primary walking and bicycling connections to BART and other important local destinations are not well lit or signed. In addition, crosswalks are not highly visible to drivers, push-button light activators are not working properly, and bus shelters and other pedestrian amenities are being removed without replacement.



Some facades that are run-down and need to be repaired and painted create an impression that the University Avenue Corridor is a dying commercial strip.



The University Avenue Study Area has several open spaces which are under-utilized and not maintained.



Residents feel that the existing billboards are intrusive and should be phased out.

Crime – The design of new buildings and public spaces places a key role in making an area safer. The University Avenue area already has been affected by fluctuating crime rates and, in some locations, vacant lots and unmaintained setbacks have become garbage dumping grounds and sleeping sites. (See also Public Safety, Policy 5.)

Poorly Maintained Open Space- The University Avenue Study Area has several parks along or adjacent to it including Aquatic Park, Columbus Park, Strawberry Creek Park, Berkeley Way Park, and Ohlone Park, but residents of the neighboring areas have said that the parks are in need of better maintenance and surveillance.

Need for Public Art- It has been suggested that more opportunities should be provided to create and display art along the Avenue.

The strategy for revitalizing University Avenue is grounded in several basic principles:

- Create mixed-use “nodes” that are within walking distance of nearby residential areas and provide local-serving goods and services.
- Design with pedestrians in mind. Buildings, storefronts, sidewalks, street lighting, trees, and amenities, must be improved and designed to provide a safer and more attractive place for people, including those with disabilities.
- Knit the two sides of the street together to the best extent possible with streetscape enhancements.
- Reinforce the connections between neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Reinforce the distinct identifies of different nodes.
- Reinforce the fact that University Avenue is an important gateway to Berkeley and the Downtown.

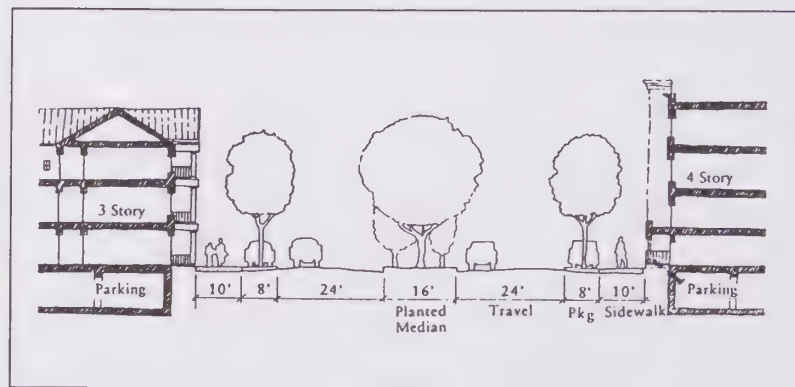


Previous Condition

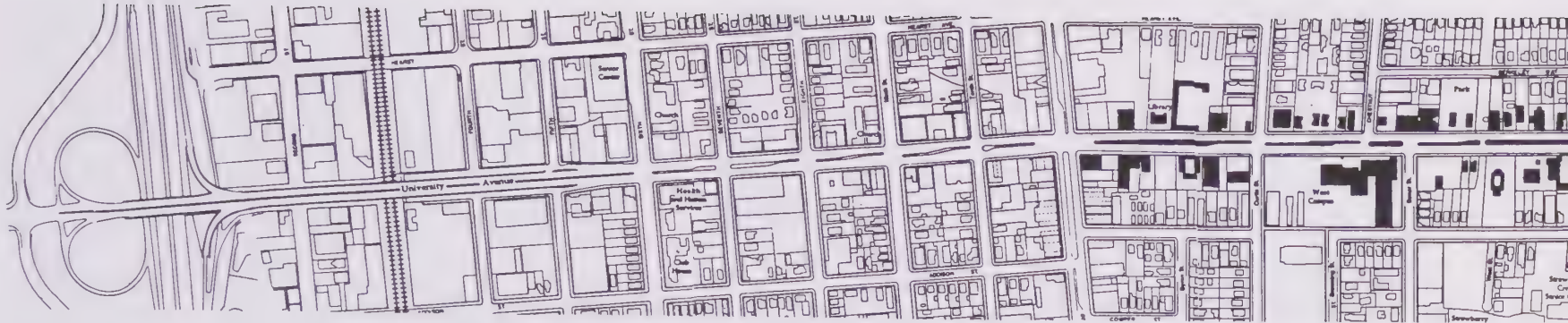


With Median Trees

The City has recently received a Small Business Administration grant to plant trees along University Avenue. This grant is being used to plant trees in the median, allowing a canopy to form and frame the street. Native and drought-tolerant plants are being used with a theme called "The Ecological Staircase," whereby each of University Avenue's sub-areas is represented by trees from the ecosystems extending from the Pacific Coast to the Berkeley Hills.



A second phase of the effort would be to plant trees within the parking lanes every 30 to 50 feet. Since a tree-well needs to be only five or six feet wide, it would remove only one or two parking stalls per block. By planting trees within the parking lane, the sidewalks on either side of the street would effectively be widened to their full ten foot width which could provide the space to put bicycle parking, a bus shelter and/or a newspaper kiosk. The crossing distance of the street would also be greatly reduced since the sidewalks would also bulb-out at the intersections. This strategy would eventually allow for slowly phasing out the Tulip Poplar Trees.



Sub-Area 1

Sub-Area 2



Ascalus californica
(California Buckeye)



Quercus agrifolia
(Coast Live Oak)



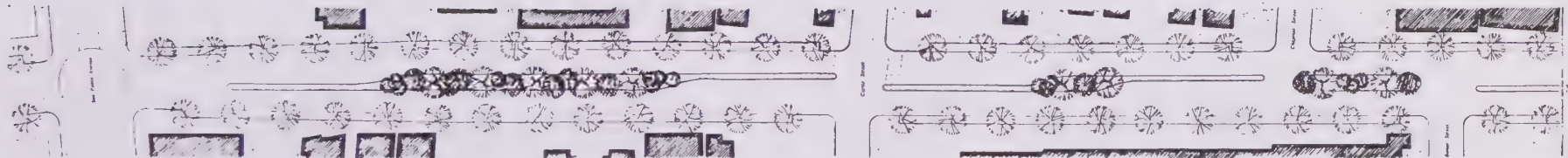
Garrya elliptica
(Coast Silktassel)



Platanus racemosa
(California Sycamore)



Quercus agrifolia
(Coast Live Oak)



Urban Design Policies and Strategies

POLICY 7: USE STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS TO HELP IMPROVE THE SAFETY, ECONOMIC VITALITY, AND PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY OF THE AVENUE.

Strategy 7A: Conduct a competition to design an appropriate gateway symbol for University Avenue. Scope of the project should be limited to modest construction/planting costs.

Strategy 7B: Implement, over time, a comprehensive Streetscape Enhancement Project that includes:

- new street tree plantings (both in the median and in the parking lanes);
- maintenance of the views to the Bay and Hills from Downtown on University Avenue through appropriate pruning of the median trees;



Enhanced streetscapes will help improve the safety and economic vitality of the Avenue and enliven pedestrian activity.

- gradual removal of the aphid infested trees and recovery of sidewalks where tree-wells are currently located (see typical street section);
- raised, paved, or specially painted crosswalks at key intersections, making sure these are safe and useable to persons with disabilities;
- sidewalk “bulb-outs” at intersections and key mid-block crossings (see Plan preceding page) to narrow the crossing distance for pedestrians (except where right turns are encouraged);
- curb ramps at intersections that are consistent with ADA and Title 24 standards;
- consider the use of “talking” traffic signals;
- new human-scale street lights;
- electrical conduit for festival lighting in the median;
- irrigation for the median landscaping;
- improved, permanent, and economically self-sufficient transit shelters with easy access to telephones;
- pedestrian amenities, such as benches, drinking fountains, bike racks, self-cleaning public toilets, emergency telephones, and newsracks, ensuring that such amenities are accessible to all;
- public sign program designed to provide direction, general information, and emergency assistance; and
- banners to welcome visitors or advertise events.

Strategy 7C: Vary elements of the streetscape program by sub-area in ways that draw out the subtle differences between neighborhoods. Implement the “Ecological Staircase” concept in the planting of trees in the median. Select a single tree species for planting in the parking lane for each sub-area. Work with local merchants to incorporate art and banners that identify each of the Avenue sub-areas.

Strategy 7D: Institute a process to work with developers to fund and implement streetscape improvements along property frontages.

Strategy 7E: Create a public arts program specifically for University Avenue as one mechanism to draw the two sides of University Avenue together. Encourage merchants and residents to work cooperatively to identify appropriate sites, hold design competitions, and identify funding sources.

Strategy 7F: Initiate a Billboard Amortization Program along University Avenue to gradually phase out existing billboards over a limited period of time. If necessary, amend the Sign Ordinance to prohibit placement of new billboards in the area.

POLICY 8: NEW AND RENOVATED BUILDINGS SHOULD BE DESIGNED WITH PEDESTRIANS AND SAFETY IN MIND. BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD HELP TO REINFORCE BOTH THE CONCEPT OF “NODAL DEVELOPMENT” AND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS.

Strategy 8A: Apply the University Avenue Strategic Plan Design Guidelines to all new and renovated buildings along the University Avenue Corridor. East of MLK Way, the “Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines” should apply. These Design Guidelines are intended to encourage street-edge buildings, with active and interesting ground floor uses, upper story housing, as well as varied and articulated architecture.

Strategy 8B: Expand Design Review authority to include all new and renovated buildings (except single-family homes) along University Avenue.

Strategy 8C: Require all new buildings along University Avenue to be at least 2 stories in height. Within Avenue Nodes allow new buildings to be a maximum of 4 stories, provided all solar access, design, parking, and privacy standards are met (see Land Use Policy 6A and the Design Guidelines). Within areas designated Avenue Mixed-Use allow new buildings to be a maximum of 3 stories, provided all solar access, design, parking, and privacy standards are met (see Design Guidelines).

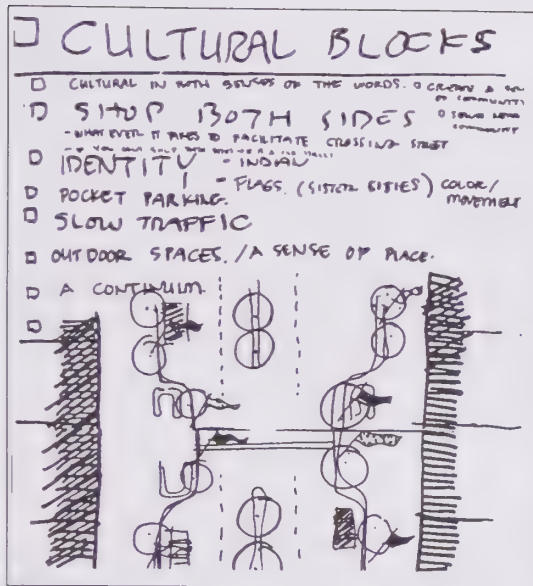


The design of new and renovated buildings along University Avenue should consider public safety by placing active uses at the ground floor level and lining streets with upper story housing or offices.

Strategy 8D: Where a parcel or development project extends through from University Avenue to the next parallel street, its scale should harmonize with that of adjacent properties, respect solar access, and maintain privacy. Buildings should step down and the use should be primarily residential on the adjoining street.

POLICY 9: ENCOURAGE PROPERTY OWNERS TO REHABILITATE, RESTORE, AND MAINTAIN EXISTING COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE STUDY AREA. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR MERCHANTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS TO MAKE APPROPRIATE IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDING FACADES AND TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES SUCH AS AWNINGS, SIGNAGE, AND LIGHTING.

Strategy 9A: Conduct an inventory of all properties and structures in the study area to assess physical condition, develop preliminary costs for rehabilitation and improvements and identify appropriate mechanisms for making improvements, such as code enforcement, grants, revolving loan funds, Business Improvement Districts, etc.



Workshop participants suggested a number of ways of improving University Avenue.

Strategy 9B: Actively enforce building codes in the University Avenue Study Area and, if necessary, take what ever steps are necessary to contact and encourage absentee owners to maintain their property. If necessary, strengthen the Anti-Blight Ordinance.

Strategy 9C: Actively enforce the existing Sign Ordinance and take steps to remove building signs that are not consistent with the regulations.

Strategy 9D: Actively enforce anti-graffiti codes and fund youth programs to remove graffiti on an on-going basis within the University Avenue Study Area.

Strategy 9E: Utilize residential rehab loan programs to include low and moderate income levels, which provide low interest loans to property owners to renovate existing rental and ownership housing, including single family. The application of these funds should ensure that moderate as well as low income residents are not displaced. (See also Housing section.)

Strategy 9F: Initiate a pilot commercial facade renovation program and continue to implement the seismic repair revolving loan fund. Test on the block between Milvia and Shattuck. If successful, extend to other areas along the Avenue. (See also Immediate Action Item #4.)

Strategy 9G: Restore the facade of the West Berkeley Branch library to its original architectural character.

POLICY 10: ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF NEW PUBLIC OPEN SPACES WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE STUDY AREA AND MAINTAIN THOSE OPEN SPACES THAT ALREADY EXIST.

Strategy 10A: Create a greenway along the West Street (former Santa Fe Railroad) right-of-way that connects Strawberry Creek Park with Berkeley Way Park. Active uses, such as community gardens, basketball courts, tennis courts, tot-lots, an outdoor cafe, and a community center must be encouraged to provide “eyes” on the park. If feasible, incorporate this route into the city-wide bicycle path network and provide a safe pedestrian connection where the greenway crosses University Ave.

Strategy 10B: Encourage new developments to provide outdoor plazas and small urban open spaces at the street to bring activity to the area and additional security.

Strategy 10C: Review parks maintenance programs and provide a strategy for on-going maintenance and police presence in local parks.

Economic Development

Setting and Issues

The primary economic activities along University Avenue include stores, restaurants, business and personal services, a few entertainment activities, and some offices. The number of businesses along University Avenue has grown at a faster rate than city as a whole and the University Avenue area has historically been a good location for small, start-up, locally owned businesses. Office-based and entertainment activities are clustered primarily in the eastern segment of the University Avenue corridor, as part of the larger Downtown area. The U.C. Theater, the Avenue's most significant entertainment use, also represents an important landmark for Downtown and the City of Berkeley as a whole. Retail activities are extremely varied in terms of the types of merchandise being sold and the size of the trade area being served. Some stores serve a very local clientele, while others are serving a city-wide or regional market. The various types of stores are intermingled, although the stores at the western end of the corridor tend to be more exclusively regionally-oriented due to their close proximity to the freeway.

A survey of real estate market conditions in Berkeley indicates that the Avenue's current land use pattern reflects current market demand. There is little evidence to suggest that demand is shifting to spur a significant change in land use patterns along the street. City-led actions, though, could help to strengthen the vitality and viability of businesses in the corridor.



Retail activities on University Avenue have historically reflected a mix between regional-serving and local-serving uses. However, even the local-serving uses are relatively dispersed, so that, with the exception of the San Pablo Avenue intersection, there are no specific areas that have the feel of a neighborhood shopping district.

National retail trends are and will continue to shape the environment in which merchants and property owners with retail space on University Avenue must operate. Many central city retail areas have been fighting the impacts of large-scale retail for many years; first from suburban style “malls” and then from the “big-box” warehouse type stores. However, until recently, Berkeley and Oakland seemed protected from these problems. With construction of the Powell Street Plaza in Emeryville and the East Baybridge shopping center at the Emeryville-Oakland border, retailers in Berkeley are now feeling the bite of this type of competition. A survey of merchants along University Avenue corroborates this conclusion, indicating that economic development policies in this plan must address the need to assist existing stores in responding to these changing market conditions and distinguishing themselves from big box, discount retailers.

In addition, an emphasis should be placed on attracting new retail activities to the central part of the University Avenue corridor and creating an atmosphere that is distinctly different than the suburban malls or big

box retail centers. The central area is at the greatest locational disadvantage in that it is not adjacent to the freeway, nor is it part of the greater synergism created by the Downtown at the Avenue’s eastern end or Fourth Street at the western end. An opportunity exists, however, to focus retail

activities in this central section to neighborhood-serving, specialty retail, particularly since this area is also ripe for additional residential development.

To ensure that retail in the central section is economically viable, it will be important to create concentrated nodes of retail activity, rather than dispersing it along the corridor. Nodes will also foster synergistic mixes of tenants, creating distinct locational identities and recognizable destinations. In addition, targeting nodes as the appropriate place for commercial activities will ensure that the supply of retail space on University Avenue will not exceed demand. In developing policies and

strategies to support existing merchants and attract new tenants, it is critical to recognize that the demand for additional retail space in this area is limited. Although the exact level of demand has not been quantified as part of this planning process, the difficulty property owners are experiencing in leasing space is a key indicator that demand for new retail space is currently relatively weak. Therefore, new space will be slow to lease up, particularly if it is isolated from other shops and not all new residential development should necessarily include ground floor retail, although this could be encouraged once the nodes are more complete.



Encourage the development of new locally-owned small businesses in the University Avenue Study Area. Vacant buildings need to be targeted for new businesses.

In general, it is expected that new office development will occur adjacent to the Downtown or in the area around Fourth Street. The balance of the Avenue will continue to function primarily as a retail street, with some interspersed residential and/or mixed-use development. However, over the long term, office development could occur in the more successful nodes, especially on sites within walking distance of BART.

In addition to implementing land use strategies, both successful and marginal businesses on University Avenue could greatly benefit from efforts to improve merchandising and marketing, such as offering an expanded mix of goods or services to appeal to a broader market or improving their display of goods. In addition, most of the area's merchants depend on word-of-mouth for advertising. However, to effectively compete in an increasingly competitive marketplace in the East Bay, merchants need to work together to undertake more proactive advertising. Joining together enables a group of small merchants to reach a large audience with minimal cost.

Economic Development Policies and Strategies

(See each Sub-Area discussion for more specific approaches to strengthening and supporting key businesses.)

POLICY 11: ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES OF UNIVERSITY AVENUE MERCHANTS.

Strategy 11A: Develop a Coordinated Marketing Program for University Avenue that might include print ads in local publications emphasizing the interesting variety of food, restaurants, services, and ethnically-oriented merchandise available in the area. Sub-area groupings of merchants may

be appropriate, as long as all merchants are included in area-wide marketing efforts.

Strategy 11B: Develop a Merchandising Support Program to provide assistance to existing University Avenue merchants. This program should be conducted as a joint effort of the City of Berkeley Office of Economic Development, the chamber of commerce, and a local association of merchants.

Strategy 11C: Encourage merchant coordination of events and public activities and establish a series of annual promotional events to occur in the various retail nodes along University Avenue. These events should be marketed on a City-wide basis to draw more people from other parts of Berkeley. Such events help establish an identity for each node and make more people familiar with the range of goods and service available there. The first such event should be the Celebration of Indian New Year. The event could incorporate the theme of the festivities in the decorations for the streetscape, window displays, and food vendors. The goal of the event should be to raise the larger region's awareness of the Indian merchant concentration and celebrating the uniqueness of the area.

POLICY 12: INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES IN THE UNIVERSITY STUDY AREA TO ENSURE THAT BUSINESSES CAN REMAIN VIABLE, AND TAKE ADVANTAGES OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE GROWTH. WORK TO RETAIN THOSE BUSINESSES THAT ARE SUCCESSFUL "ANCHORS" IN EACH NODE.

Strategy 12A: Establish an education and training program to enhance small business merchants' ability to find and obtain private capital financing sources. The City should take the lead in educating merchants regarding potential sources of funds for small businesses including conventional loan financing, Small Business Administration loans, and other special programs that might be available to University Avenue businesses. To the extent necessary, this program could be expanded to assist merchants with general business practices, including accounting, inventory control, personnel management, etc.

Strategy 12B: Consider forming a Business Improvement District (BID). Business Improvement Districts can provide a significant mechanism for funding district-wide improvements, coordinating marketing efforts, soliciting new tenants, and solving unique problems.

Strategy 12C: Review the effectiveness of all City small business support programs, such as the Citywide Loan Fund and the Facade Improvement Grant, that assist merchants in undertaking physical improvements to store interiors, facade improvements, and signage improvements. Consider implementing a revised low-interest small business loan fund that addresses the specific needs and composition of the University Avenue merchants.

Strategy 12D: Establish an on-going outreach program between City staff and University Avenue Merchants. This program should provide early warning when merchants, especially those that serve as anchors in their subareas, are having problems that could result in their moving or closing down their business. The City should create a full-time position to conduct this type of outreach and to assist in attracting new businesses to the area (see below). Businesses functioning as anchors in each subarea are identified in the Sub-Area discussion.

POLICY 13: THERE SHOULD BE A STRONG EMPHASIS ON BRINGING A VARIETY OF NEW BUSINESSES TO UNIVERSITY AVENUE.

Strategy 13A: Create a City staff unit specifically assigned to University Avenue with the task of working with property owners to encourage building rehab and development on opportunity sites, linking tenant with available space, studying the feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District, coordinating merchant activities and promotional events, implementing a festival lighting program, and facilitating information flow to merchants, property owners, and residents.

Strategy 13B: Develop informational/marketing materials that could be distributed to prospective tenants interested in doing business on University Avenue. These materials could include a description of the types of space and/or land available, typical lease rates and terms, area demographics, a description of the City's permitting process, and the names of key people to contact for further information.

Strategy 13C: Target attraction activities towards neighborhood-serving retail uses. Strong efforts should be made to attract locally-owned businesses, although chains can also be appropriate depending on the type of store and their physical requirements. All new businesses should design their facades and signage to be consistent with the character of the area in which they are locating. Smaller service-oriented users should be encouraged to locate in space between the nodes, rather than directly in the nodes themselves; fast food and auto-repair businesses should be discouraged.

Strategy 13D: Establish linkages to entrepreneurship training programs and the Alameda County Small Business Development Center to identify prospective entrepreneurs who might be interested in opening businesses in the area.

Strategy 13E: Assist the creation of locally-owned small business start-ups by continuing the City's Business and Real Estate Assistance Program and targeting it to the University Avenue area. Consider encouraging micro businesses such as push carts and kiosks at key corners with the nodes.

Strategy 13F: Look for opportunities to use vacant store fronts with short-term temporary activities such as holiday crafts fairs, art galleries, and retail outlets for charity activities.

Housing

Setting and Issues

University Avenue is an important gateway to Berkeley, a primary transportation route, and a corridor that has traditionally provided reasonably affordable housing to Berkeley residents. Today, the study area has over 3,700 units, which, at approximately 9% of Berkeley's total housing stock, makes it an important city-wide resource of housing. Of these units, approximately 80% are rental housing. Data for census tracts show that area is has not changed significantly in demographics over the last ten years, if anything, incomes and home values have improved slightly.

Though much of the housing in the study area is located in primarily single-family neighborhoods one and two blocks off of University, many residential units are located along the Avenue itself. Small apartment buildings make up the bulk of the area's housing stock. However, there are numerous vacant and underutilized sites, particularly along the Avenue itself, that provide opportunities for up to 700 additional residential units (a 20% increase) in a mix of new apartment buildings, live-work units, townhouses, and single-family homes.

From a broad planning perspective, University Avenue is a particularly attractive site for new housing, since residents would have easy walking access to transit and convenient local-serving shopping. New housing along University Avenue is a key strategy to establish economically viable mixed-use "nodes," as future residents would also be potential patrons of local businesses. However, some believe that the current dominance of low income rental housing and the high proportion of subsidized units has impaired the area's stability and economic vitality, suggesting that much of the new housing should be owner-occupied and market rate. Others, though, note that the area has been dominated by rental housing for years

Today, the study area has over 3,700 units of housing. Additional residents would help bolster the economic strength of the Avenue.



and cite negligent, often absentee property owners as one of the area's problems, suggesting that the City Anti-blight laws need strengthening.

Though data is presented below to characterize the current mix of housing in the area, there is little statistical evidence to document "cause and effect" relationships between the mix of housing and physical and public safety conditions on the Avenue. What emerges, however, is a clear sense that current city policies, on a variety of levels, need to be re-examined in order to create a district where there is a balanced mix of households: owners and renters; low, moderate, and average incomes; and a full spectrum of families and age groups.

Stimulating new private investment along the Avenue is another important issue. The "Avenues Plan" is the Planning Commission's effort to provide incentives for private investment in new housing along the city's commercial corridors. It clarifies the City's inclusionary housing provisions in these areas and suggests other changes to permit processing and zoning provisions. A particular concern for the University Avenue Study Area is the financial feasibility of building new for-sale or rental housing. Several factors are at play: the high cost of land along the University Avenue corridor, the required amount of parking and the cost of providing that parking, the required amount of on-site open space, and the difficulty for small developers to obtain bank financing.

Design of new and renovated residential structures is also an important consideration for the Strategic Plan. Though this issue is addressed by a separate Urban Design section of this Plan, it is critical that any new housing or mixed-use development must make a positive contribution to the character and scale of the Avenue. This will require new Design Guidelines specifically tailored to the conditions of University Avenue, as well as

possible amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to address parking and open space standards.

Housing Data and Conditions

Table 1 compares housing stock data for the study area in relationship to similar data for the Census Tracts surrounding University Avenue, and to the city as a whole. Table 2 shows change in the housing stock for these same three geographic areas from 1990 to 1995, as data is available. A map of the relationship between the study area and the census tract boundaries is provided in the Opportunities and Constraints section.

The data show that a significant majority of the housing stock in the University Avenue study area (80%) is currently rental housing. The census tracts surrounding University Avenue include lower density residential areas to the north and south of the Avenue and are only 68% rental. In comparison, the city of Berkeley's overall housing stock is 56% rental.

Another factor affecting the Avenue is the cost of housing as compared with incomes of local residents. Median household incomes in the Census Tract area are predominately low income, at approximately 81% of the city-wide average and roughly 64% of Alameda County as a whole. One reason for these below median household income figures is the relatively high proportion of housing stock devoted to rental housing. Also, a significant proportion of extreme incomes such as students or other low income populations can skew the average. However, it should also be noted that the median household size in Berkeley is lower than the median household size in the County, which further skews the average.

The relationship to county-wide median income levels is particu-

larly relevant since the City's inclusionary housing standards are tied to these statistics. Thus, the average University Avenue household would generally qualify for ownership or rental housing at the low income category (60% of Area Median Incomes). The City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, as revised by the Avenues Plan, requires that a portion of any new units built, above 10 units or more, within the city be affordable to households with incomes at 80% and 100% of the county-wide median income levels (AMI). In some cases, though, these inclusionary units may be more expensive than the average rent or purchase price of existing available units which establishes the price for "market rate" housing units.

Past housing policies and subsidies have resulted in the University Avenue study area containing a significant proportion of the subsidized housing stock in the city of Berkeley, as shown on Table 1. University Avenue accounts for approximately 9% of the City's total housing stock, with 4% of the owners and 12% of the renters. Approximately 23% of all directly subsidized rental housing units in the city are located within the University Avenue study area. Virtually all of these subsidized units are occupied by households at or below 60% of county-wide median incomes. These units include 34% of all subsidized senior housing units, 57% of all directly subsidized apartment projects, and 51% of all units specifically targeted for housing homeless populations.¹² In addition, 11% of all households receiving housing vouchers through the

HUD Section 8 program also live in the study area.¹³ Furthermore, the University Avenue study area is home to 61% of the subsidized owner-occupied housing stock in the city.



The City should actively encourage the renovation and preservation of the existing housing stock in the Study Area.

In addition, the majority of those SROs that are not included in the category of units targeted to homeless populations and do not receive direct subsidies from the City are also located in the study

area (see Tables 1 and 2). A total of 74% of all of these SRO units in the city are located within the University Avenue study area, primarily in downtown (Sub-Area 4) on the block between Shattuck and Milvia. These units are significant because although many of them are unoccupied, in various states of disrepair, and seismically damaged, their re-use is currently substantially limited by zoning ordinance section 15.1.2: Conversion of Residential Hotel Rooms. Recent attempts to repair and re-open them have failed, leaving a number of buildings in the downtown area vacant or only usable during warm weather. Table 2 also shows that there has been very little change in these patterns of use either in the University Avenue study area, the surrounding census tracts, or in the city as a whole. A significant exception is the number of limited equity

coops in the study area, which increased by 55% between 1990 and 1995.

Certain, more recent, events have become focal points for the community's concern over conditions along the Avenue. First, national

Table 1: City of Berkeley Housing Summary Comparisons - 1995

	CITY OF BERKELEY	UNIVERSITY AVENUE CENSUS TRACTS (j)	% of City	UNIVERSITY AVENUE PLANNING AREA (a)	% of City
Population	102,724 (m)	26,227 (m)	26%	7,964 (b)	8%
Overall Housing Stock	43,453 (m)	12,476 (m)	29%	3,739	9% (e)
Total Owner	18,941 (m)	4,041 (m)	21%	754 (c)	4%
Total Renter	24,512 (m)	8,435 (m)	34%	2,985 (d)	12%
Subsidized Stock (h)					
Total Owner	141	73	52%	73	52%
Limited Equity Cooperative Units	141	73	52%	73	52%
Total Rental	2,520	994	39%	569	23%
Senior Units	619	255	41%	209	34%
Apartment Projects	325	184	57%	184	57%
Section 8 Certificates	1,576 (k)	555 (k)	35%	176 (f)	11%
Total Units Targeted for Homeless Population (g)	441	291	66%	227	51%
Subsidized SRO's (h)	109	109	100%	109	100%
Subsidized Homeless Shelter Beds	231	112	48%	65	28%
Subsidized Transitional Beds	101	70	69%	53	52%
Total SRO'S, Rooming Houses (n)	2,628	400	15%	350	13%
SRO's(i)	475	400	84%	350	74%
Rooming Houses (l)	2,153	0	0%	0	0%

Sources include 1990 US Census, University Ave. Statistical Profile, General Plan Conditions, Trends & Issues Report, City of Berkeley
Prepared by Bay Area Economics, 1995

Notes:

- (a) The University Avenue Planning Area is defined as the area around University Avenue from I-80 on the west to Oxford Street on the east. Alston Street comprises the southern border, and Hearst and then Delaware west of Sacramento represents the northern boundary of the Study Area
- (b) Population for Planning Area calculated by multiplying Total Housing Stock within the Planning Area by 2.13, (the Average Household Size for the City of Berkeley, 1990 US Census)
- (c) City of Berkeley Information Systems, Land Management Data Base data for all residential units in study area minus rental units determined using Berkeley Rent Board data for registered rental units in study area (d)
- (d) Berkeley Rent Board data for registered rental units in study area
- (e) This percent has been derived by applying the total 1995 University Ave. Planning Area owner and renter housing stock figures to 1990 owner renter ratios provided by US Census data for the City of Berkeley
- (f) Section 8 voucher numbers are from 1994. Although there are no figures available for Section 8 Vouchers in 1990 for the Planning Area, the number is believed to be fairly constant. Figures for the Planning Area have been provided by the City of Berkeley Planning Department
- (g) Units for which there is a specific program or policy responsible for providing tenants from the ranks of the homeless
This category mixes SRO units, with transitional housing and homeless shelters both of which are defined as "Beds" not units.
- (h) Subsidized is defined as receiving funding support from the City of Berkeley
- (i) Includes all non-subsidized SRO units that are existing in-use, existing vacant, and proposed for restoration
- (j) University Ave. Census Tracts includes tracts 4220, 4221, 4222, 4223, 4224, 4229, 4230, 4231, and 4232.
- (k) City of Berkeley Conditions, Trends & Issues Report shows "Distribution of Tenants with Section 8 Certificates in 1992", and are assumed to be fairly consistent between 1990 and 1995
- (l) Includes all Boarding Houses, Rooming Houses, and Non-UC operated Group Housing for Students
- (m) Population, housing stock, and housing tenure data is from the 1990 US Census.
- (n) Does not include UA Homes and Bel Air facilities because these are already counted in "Total Units Targeted to Homeless Populations"

Prepared by Bay Area Economics 11/28/95

Table 2: City of Berkeley Housing Stock Comparisons 1990 - 1995

	1990	% Total In City	1995	% Total In City	Total Change 1990-1995	Average Annual Change
UNIVERSITY AVENUE PLANNING AREA (a)						
Population	N/A		7,964 (b)	7.8%	N/A	N/A
Overall Housing Stock	N/A		3,739	8.6% (e)	N/A	N/A
Total Owner	N/A		754 (c)	4.0% (e)	N/A	N/A
Total Renter	N/A		2,985 (d)	12.2% (e)	N/A	N/A
Subsidized Stock						
Total Owner	47	45.2%	73	52%	55%	11%
Limited Equity Cooperative Units	47		73			
Total Rental	549	22.2%	569	22.6%	3.6%	1%
Senior Units	209		209			
Apartment Projects	164		184			
Section 8 Certificates	176 (f)		176 (f)			
Total Units Targeted to Homeless Population (g)	192	47.3%	227	51.5%	18.2%	3%
Subsidized SRO's (h)	74		109			
Subsidized Homeless Shelter Beds	65		65			
Subsidized Transitional Beds	53		53			
Total non-subsidized SRO'S, Rooming Houses	350	13.3%	350	13.3%	0.0%	0%
SRO's(i)	350		350			
Rooming Houses (l)	0		0			
UNIVERSITY AVENUE CENSUS TRACTS (j)						
Population	26,227	25.5%	N/A		N/A	N/A
Overall Housing Stock						
Total Owner	4,041	21.3%	N/A		N/A	N/A
Total Renter	8,435	34.4%	N/A		N/A	N/A
Subsidized Stock						
Total Owner	47	45.2%	105	60.7%	123.4%	17%
Limited Equity Cooperative Units	47		105			
Total Rental	974	39.4%	994	39.4%	2.1%	0%
Senior Units	255		255			
Apartment Projects	164		184			
Section 8 Certificates	555 (k)		555 (k)			
Total Units Targeted to Homeless Population	253	62.3%	288	65.3%	13.8%	3%
Subsidized SRO's	74		109			
Subsidized Homeless Shelter Units	112		112			
Subsidized Transitional Units	67		67			
Total non-subsidized SRO'S, Rooming Houses	400	15.2%	400	15.2%	0.0%	0%
SRO's(i)	400		400			
Rooming Houses (l)	0		0			

Prepared by Bay Area Economics 11/28/95

Table 2: City of Berkeley Housing Stock Comparisons 1990 - 1995

	1990	% Total In City	1995	% Total In City	Total Change 1990-1995	Average Annual Change
CITY OF BERKELEY						
Population	102,724	100.0%	N/A		N/A	N/A
Overall Housing Stock						
Total Owner	18,941	100.0%	N/A		N/A	N/A
Total Renter	24,512	100.0%	N/A		N/A	N/A
Subsidized Stock						
Total Owner	104	100.0%	141	100.0%	35%	7%
Limited Equity Cooperative Units	104		141			
Total Rental Units	2,471	100.0%	2,520	100.0%	2.0%	0%
Senior Units	619		619			
Apartment Projects	276		325			
Section 8 Certificates	1,576 (k)		1,576 (k)			
Total Units Targeted to Homeless Population (g)	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	8.6%	2%
Subsidized SRO's	74		109			
Subsidized Homeless Shelter Units	231		231			
Subsidized Transitional Units	101		101			
Total non-subsidized SRO'S, Rooming Houses	2,628	100.0%	2,628	100.0%	0.0%	0%
SRO's(i)	475		475			
Rooming Houses (l)	2,153		2,153			

Sources include: 1990 U.S. Census, University Ave. Statistical Profile, General Plan Conditions, Trends & Issues Report, City of Berkeley
 Prepared by: Bay Area Economics, 1995

Notes:

- (a) The University Avenue Planning Area is defined as the area around University Avenue from I-80 on the west to Oxford Street on the east. Alston Street comprises the southern border, and Hearst and then Delaware west of Sacramento represents the northern boundary of the Study Area.
- (b) Population for Planning Area calculated by multiplying Total Housing Stock within the Planning Area by 2.13, (the Average Household Size for the City of Berkeley, 1990 US Census).
- (c) City of Berkeley Information Systems, Land Management Data Base data for all residential units in study area minus (d).
- (d) Berkeley Rent Board data for registered rental units in study area.
- (e) This percent has been derived by applying the total 1995 University Ave. Planning Area owner and renter housing stock figures to 1990 owner renter ratios provided by US Census data for the City of Berkeley.
- (f) Section 8 voucher numbers are from 1994. Although there are no figures available for Section 8 Vouchers in 1990 for the Planning Area, the number is believed to be fairly constant. Figures for the Planning Area have been provided by the City of Berkeley Planning Department.
- (g) Units for which there is a specific program or policy responsible for providing tenants from the ranks of the homeless. This category mixes SRO units, with transitional housing and homeless shelters both of which are defined as "Beds" not units.
- (h) Subsidized is defined as receiving funding support from the City of Berkeley.
- (i) Includes all non-subsidized SRO units that are existing in-use, existing vacant, and proposed for restoration.
- (j) University Ave. Census Tracts includes tracts 4220, 4221, 4222, 4223, 4224, 4229, 4230, 4231, and 4232.
- (k) City of Berkeley Conditions, Trends & Issues Report shows "Distribution of Tenants with Section 8 Certificates in 1992", and are assumed to be fairly consistent between 1990 and 1995.
- (l) Includes all Boarding Houses, Rooming Houses, and Non-UC operated Group Housing for Students.

trends starting in the mid-1980s have created a homeless problem in the U.S. on an order of magnitude that this country has not experienced for many years. At the local level, this problem has manifested itself with an increase in the number of homeless people sleeping in our streets and parks, and an increased number of panhandlers in commercial districts including Downtown Berkeley. The net effect is an increased demand for City staff, including police, code enforcement personnel, and even in some cases, social service providers, to address the needs of homeless people and to meet the concerns of the residents to improve public safety and the health and welfare of the community.

As the Avenue revitalizes over time, it is conceivable that rents and home prices may gradually rise. While the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance will protect the number of available housing units both within the study area and city-wide, this alone may not be sufficient to maintain the quality and affordability of the existing housing stock. Similarly, as the impact of changes in the Rent Control Ordinance takes effect, existing University Avenue and other city residents may additionally feel the pinch of rising housing prices, unless the City makes efforts to provide affordable housing options on a city-wide basis.

The Strategic Plan focuses on directing the changes that will happen along the Avenue in ways that ultimately create a district where there is a balanced mix of households: owners and renters; low, moderate, and average incomes; and a full spectrum of families and age groups.

Housing Policies and Strategies

POLICY 14: ENCOURAGE A DIVERSITY OF NEW HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE STUDY AREA, IN TERMS OF TENURE, INCOME, AND UNIT TYPE. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR DEVELOPERS TO BUILD NEW URBAN HOUSING ALONG UNIVERSITY AVENUE.

Strategy 14A: Create a package of economic and other incentives aimed at encouraging developers to build new market rate housing (which contain inclusionary units) in the University Avenue Study Area. These incentives may include, but not be limited to flexible parking requirements, reduced on-site open space requirements, waived permit processing fees, and/or short-term financial assistance.

Strategy 14B: Establish a First Time Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance Program to help existing low and moderate income residents in the study area to purchase new housing units and residences within the study area. This program should include shared down payment and reasonable resale controls consistent with the Avenues plan inclusionary provisions. Maintaining affordability should be balanced with the ability for low and moderate residents to develop economic stake in their property.

Strategy 14C: Encourage and remove barriers to creative ownership programs designed to maintain some affordability while providing long-term economic security for low and moderate income residents by allowing them to develop some financial equity in their property. This could include sweat equity housing, co-housing, and conversion of some rental housing to ownership, particularly in buildings that are in decline.

Strategy 14D: Work with local for-profit and non-profit developers to construct at least one mixed Senior and Disabled Housing Project along the University Avenue Corridor.

POLICY 15: ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE THE RENOVATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK IN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE STUDY AREA.

Strategy 15A: Utilize residential rehab loan programs to include low and moderate income levels, which provide low interest loans to property owners to renovate existing rental and ownership housing, including single family. The application of these funds should ensure that moderate as well as low income residents are not displaced. The use of these funds to create accessible units should be encouraged.

Strategy 15B: Establish a First Time Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance Program to help existing low and moderate income residents in the study area to purchase new housing units and residences within the study area. This program should include shared down payment and reasonable resale controls consistent with the Avenues plan inclusionary provisions. Maintaining affordability should be balanced with the ability for low and moderate residents to develop economic stake in their property. Encourage persons with disabilities who own or are purchasing homes to apply for low-interest loans to make existing units more accessible.

Strategy 15C: Utilize limited equity cooperatives to assist in the preservation and renovation of existing rental properties.

Strategy 15D: Actively enforce building codes in the University Avenue Study Area, target specific properties that are in need of significant repair, and take what ever steps are necessary to contact and encourage negligent owners to maintain their property. If necessary, strengthen and step-up efforts to enforce the Anti-Blight Ordinance.

Strategy 15E: Give priority to the Milvia to Shattuck block of University Avenue for use of the Seismic Rehab Revolving Loan Fund, Facade Improvement Grants, and Rental Acquisition Program, as well as stronger enforcement of the Anti-Blight Ordinance and other City codes. In addition, allow those SRO units that have been vacant for a number of years, approximately 55 units, to be considered for alternative uses.

Strategy 15F: Amend the City's Residential Hotel Non-Conversion Ordinance to permit the conversion of long-term vacant units (such as the 55 units on University Avenue) and mitigate the loss of those very low income units through a City commitment to the following:

- 1) Assist in the replacement of the 55 vacant units with 55 units affordable to low income, single individuals over time within the city limits;
- 2) encourage the development of housing projects at the two sites currently occupied by these 55 units;
- 3) if other uses than housing with ground floor retail are proposed for the 55 units, an appropriate in lieu fee shall be paid into the Housing Trust Fund for the purpose of maintaining long-term affordable housing.

Also, specifically target the 81 SRO units which are in need of rehabilitation for the following:

- 1) Within a six month timetable the City should meet with individual owners in an attempt to identify specific causes for building disrepair;
- 2) Identify issues and propose options to facilitate restoration and rehabilitation which may include:
 - a) changing the specific configurations of units to reflect more desirable living arrangements, b) understanding the financial ramifications of seismic upgrading and other building code requirements, c) reviewing funding assistance options including; tax abatement/tax credit and other sources, d) keeping in mind the goal to avoid displacement of building occupants; if any of the 81 units are lost, assist in the replacement with units affordable to low income, single individuals over time within the city limits, e) establishing specific building management criteria with on-going monitoring as prerequisite to assistance.

Strategy 15G: The City should develop city-wide policies to address the siting, planning, monitoring and evaluation of social service and housing programs. In order to assess the positive and negative impacts of these city-wide programs, and particularly along the University Avenue corridor, the City should commission an independent report to help in the development of policies and strategies to minimize the adverse impacts and maximize the benefits to program participants.

Strategy 15H: Insure that a funding component for social services has been identified prior to approval of any new special-needs housing.

POLICY 16: THE DESIGN OF NEW AND RENOVATED HOUSING ALONG THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORRIDOR SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO ITS CHARACTER, WITHOUT NEGATIVELY IMPACTING RESIDENTS OF ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

Strategy 16A: The University Avenue Strategic Plan Design Guidelines should be applied to all new and renovated projects along the University Avenue Corridor and incorporated into the new Zoning Overlay requirements.

Strategy 16B: Amend the Zoning Ordinance provisions for new residential projects within the C-1 zone to reduce the amount of open space where quality open can be provided on-site. Set a minimum standard building height limit for projects fronting University Avenue. (See Land Use and Urban Design for detailed provisions.)



Enhancement activities are taking place on the Avenue. This former motel has been successfully renovated and is now an active enhancement of the street.

Transportation

Setting and Issues

University Avenue is one of Berkeley's most important transportation corridors and one of its most heavily trafficked route. Over 53,000 cars per day pass along its length, in part because it is one of only three exits from I-80 to Berkeley and it connects the freeway and San Pablo Avenue with Downtown and the U.C. Campus. As with Berkeley's other Avenues – Shattuck, Telegraph, Sacramento, and Martin Luther King Junior Way – University is also an important retail and residential corridor. Though it is well-served by a highly used bus line and is near two BART stations, it is designed more for automobiles than for pedestrians.

University Avenue presents an opportunity to create a truly “multi-modal corridor” – a street where walking is not only safe, but is encouraged; where frequent shuttle buses allow shoppers to easily get from one node to the next; where bicycling is a viable alternative; and where auto traffic is tamed.

In order to achieve this vision, though, a number of issues must be addressed:

Streetscape Design and Pedestrian Amenities– As discussed above under Urban Design, University Avenue is in need of physical street improvements: street trees that narrow the visual travel corridor and thus slow traffic; improved sidewalks and crossings that accommodate pedestrians; lighting that is scaled to people, not cars; a sign program to provide public safety directions and to facilitate pedestrian movement; and other public safety-related amenities such as benches, fountains, newsracks, etc. that help make the street pleasant to be on and outdoor plazas that help bring people onto the street.

Bus shelters are of particular concern to the community, for although University Avenue is well served by buses, bus stop amenities are virtually non-existent. In fact, AC Transit has removed most of its bus shelters city-wide and eliminated its bus shelter maintenance program altogether. The City is pursuing the development of a county-wide bus shelter program that



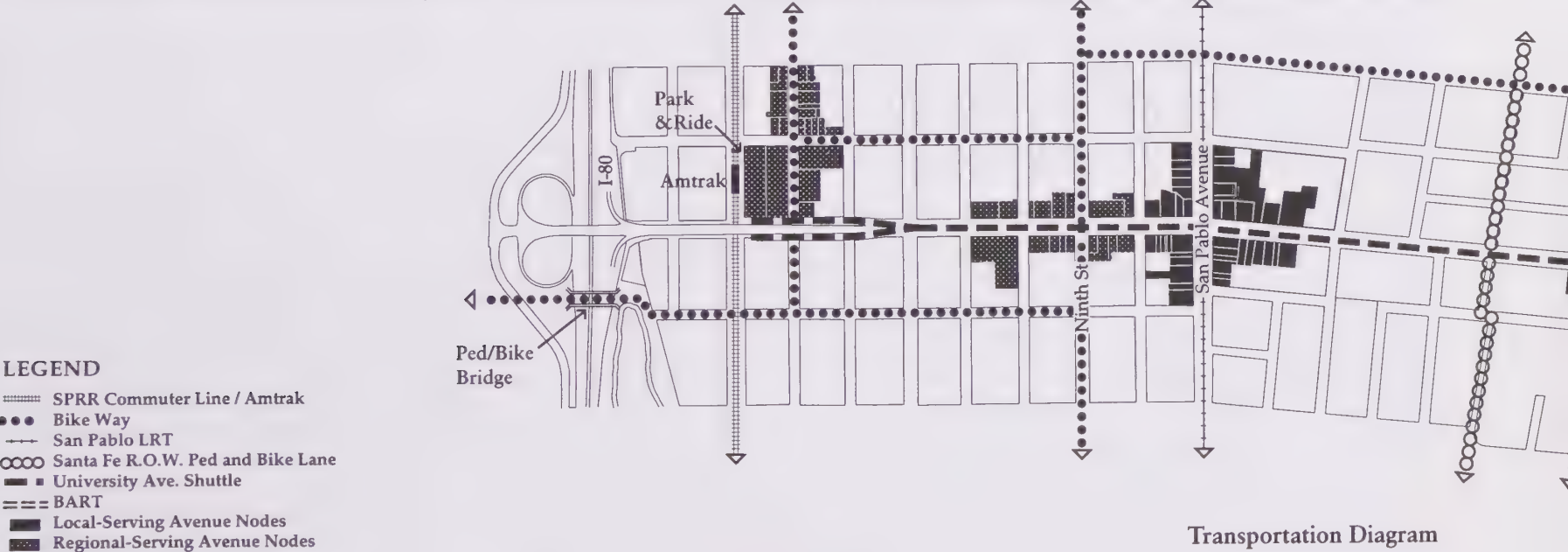
Making transit connections to regional systems such as Amtrak could provide easy connections to other East Bay communities and San Jose in the future.

could be supported through poster-sized advertising. Ideally, the bus shelters along University Avenue would include schedules, maps, emergency information and phones. At a minimum, the City is attempting to secure funding for bus benches.

Transit – Though University Avenue is currently served by the AC Transit bus system, many members of the community see a need for more frequent and attractive service that is dedicated to University Avenue. While light rail would perhaps provide a stabilizing influence, it is probably not feasible for at least 20 to 30 years, given the density of development along the Avenue and the cost of building new alignments. Therefore, some have suggested that a special electric shuttle that augmented the existing AC Transit bus service and linked West Berkeley with Downtown would both

provide additional needed service and help create an amenity that benefited residents and merchants alike. Such service could also potentially benefit U.C. faculty, staff, and students.

In addition to local service, University Avenue provides an important opportunity for making regional transit connections. Three regional transit systems affect the University Avenue area: the North Berkeley and Downtown Berkeley BART Stations, a planned electric trolley system that would follow San Pablo Avenue, and a future commuter rail connection that extends along the current SPRR/Amtrak line and could provide a connection to other East Bay and South Bay communities. The City's Redevelopment Agency has already considered creating a multi-modal transit hub at the foot of University (on the site of the Spenger's parking lot) that would

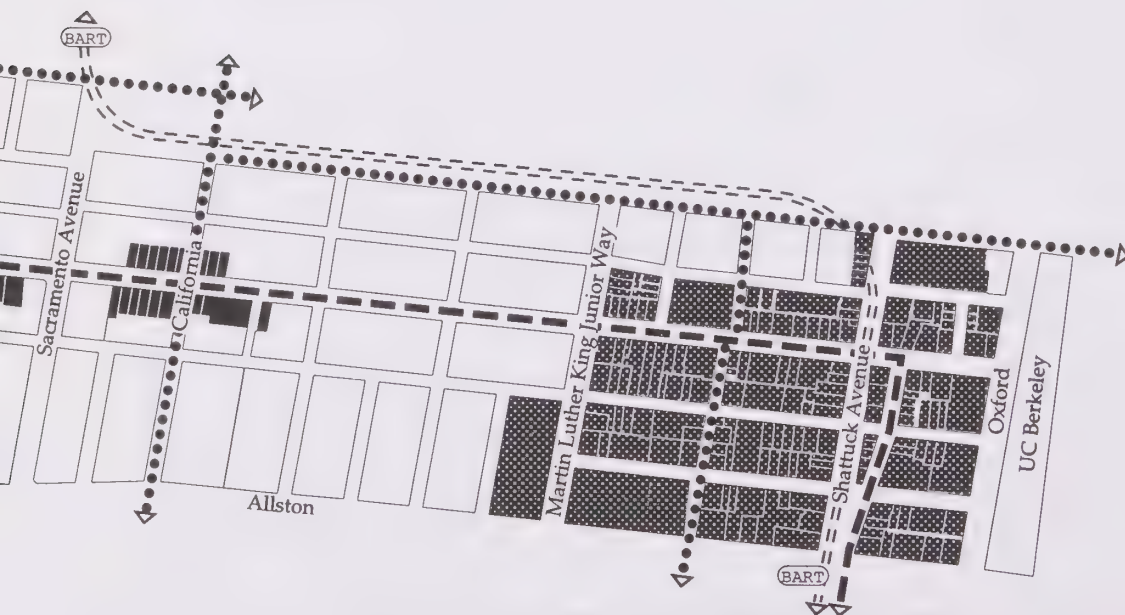


provide a satellite parking facility, a timed transfer connection to AC Transit or a University Avenue Electric Shuttle, Amtrak, and any future regional commuter rail on the SPRR line.

Bicycles - Many Berkeley residents use bicycles as their primary form of transportation and others ride bicycles to do errands in their neighborhood. In 1993, the City began to develop a city-wide bicycle plan. After working with local cyclists, the City's consultants recommended an extensive array of improvements and changes, including designation of bicycle boulevards, designation of new bicycle routes, and construction of a bicycle bridge to the Waterfront. The Bicycle Master Plan has not yet been completed. In the University Avenue Study Area there are too many dangerous intersections, such as at the corner of Milvia and University, and not

enough bicycle routes or bike racks. Hearst has been specifically cited as a street that should have a bicycle lane, even if it means narrowing the existing lanes of automobile traffic. Addison was suggested as an appropriate connection to a bicycle/pedestrian bridge from Aquatic Park to the Waterfront.

Auto Traffic - Several existing conditions exacerbate traffic on University Avenue and, in some cases, push traffic onto adjacent parallel side streets. For example, the existing street lights are timed to encourage speeding traffic; some intersections, notably at Sixth Street, San Pablo, Milvia, and Shattuck, are particularly congested and are in need of turn signals and improved pedestrian access; and the vast number of mid-block curb cuts along the street adds to the congestion and increases the number of pedestrian/auto conflicts.



Parking – Parking is a very complex issue because the University Avenue Study Area must provide for the needs of visitors, as well as accommodating the merchants and residents working and living in the area. Members of the community have expressed a concern that the numerous parking lots that line the street are visually unappealing and only serve to detract from a potential pedestrian-oriented atmosphere; traffic noise from parking lots also tends to filter through to neighborhoods. Most merchants in the University Avenue area, though, perceive a parking shortage and consider it a disadvantage to being located there. The perceived need for more parking was mentioned most frequently by merchants who are located in Sub-Area One along University Avenue, west of San Pablo Avenue. Merchants report that parking enforcement and changes to parking meters on University Avenue have significantly impacted their businesses. Along those lines, it has been suggested that a satellite parking facility located near I-80 could potentially alleviate parking problems in West Berkeley, as well as in Downtown and around the U.C. campus if it was linked with a frequent local shuttle system.

Transportation Policies and Strategies

POLICY 17: IMPLEMENT, OVER TIME, A COMPREHENSIVE STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT TO REINFORCE AND IMPROVE UNIVERSITY AVENUE AS A MULTI-MODAL CORRIDOR. (SEE ALSO URBAN DESIGN.)

Strategy 17A: Implement, over time, a comprehensive Streetscape Enhancement Project that includes:

- new street tree plantings (both in the median and in the parking lanes);
- gradual removal of the aphid infested trees and recovery of sidewalks where tree-wells are currently located (see typical street section);
- raised, paved, or specially painted crosswalks at key intersections, making sure these are safe and useable by all persons with disabilities;
- sidewalk “bulb-outs” at intersections and key mid-block crossings (see Plan preceding page) to narrow the crossing distance for pedestrians (except where right turns are encouraged) and push button-activated crossing signals;
- curb ramps at intersections that are consistent with ADA and Title 24 standards;
- consider the use of “talking” traffic signals;
- new human-scale street lights;
- electrical conduit for festival lighting in the median;
- irrigation for the median landscaping;
- improved, permanent, and economically self-sufficient transit shelters with easy access to telephones;

- pedestrian amenities, such as benches, drinking fountains, bike racks, self-cleaning public toilets, emergency telephones, and newsracks, ensuring that such amenities are accessible to all;
- sign program designed to provide direction, general information, and emergency assistance; and
- banners to welcome visitors or advertise events.

POLICY 18: IMPROVE TRANSIT SERVICE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE STUDY AREA AND TIE TO EXISTING AND FUTURE REGIONAL TRANSIT FACILITIES.

Strategy 18A: Work with AC Transit and U.C. to study the feasibility of creating a special electric bus service that follows University Avenue to BART and Downtown Berkeley. These new vehicles should be small-scale, accessible, ecologically sensitive, uniquely designed, and if possible, open air. Work to make the service either free or very low cost. In the long term, study the feasibility of accessible trolley service on University.

Strategy 18B: Work with appropriate agencies to, in the long term, implement commuter rail service on the SPRR train tracks and provide timed bus transfers to buses that follow University Avenue.

Strategy 18C: Prepare a Master Plan for the Spenger's parking lot that creates a multi-modal transportation hub with a satellite parking facility, timed shuttle transfer station, Amtrak/commuter rail station, mixed-use development, and public open space. (See also Sub-Area 1.)

POLICY 19: IMPROVE BICYCLE ACCESS WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE STUDY AREA AND MAKE THE AREA "BICYCLE FRIENDLY."

Strategy 19A: Complete the Bicycle Master Plan and work with local bicycle advocates to resolve which streets shall be identified, signed, and striped as bicycle routes. At a minimum, identify bicycle routes within the University Avenue corridor that place bikes on parallel routes.

Strategy 19B: Continue to implement the current program to provide additional bicycle racks and other bicycle amenities within the University Avenue Corridor.

Strategy 19C: Support the construction of an I-80 pedestrian, wheelchair and bicycle overcrossing.

POLICY 20: IMPLEMENT IMPROVEMENTS TO TAME TRAFFIC ALONG UNIVERSITY AVENUE, BUT PROTECT THE ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS FROM EXCESSIVE TRAFFIC.

Strategy 20A: Re-time the signal system along University to encourage slower speeds and to improve the overall flow of traffic.

Strategy 20B: Study problem intersections (Sixth Street, San Pablo, Milvia, McGee, and Shattuck) and identify appropriate improvements to reduce congestion, while ensuring safe pedestrian crossings.

Strategy 20C: Reduce the number of mid-block curb cuts along University Avenue that are not used for wheel chair access; consult with Disability Commission prior to implementation.

POLICY 21: ENCOURAGE USE OF ON-STREET PARKING FOR CUSTOMERS OF LOCAL MERCHANTS, ESPECIALLY ON UNIVERSITY AVENUE.

Strategy 21A: Extend parking meter times to two-hours along the length of University Avenue. Lengthening the time allocated to parking meters would encourage customers to find parking and have ample time to frequent the Avenue's businesses.

Strategy 21B: Encourage employers to be responsible for their employee's transportation and parking. Over time, increase the number of employees arriving to work via transit and reduce the number of lots devoted to employee parking.

POLICY 22: ENCOURAGE COMMERCIAL USERS TO CONSIDER PROVIDING CENTRALLY-LOCATED, SHARED PARKING FACILITIES FOR CUSTOMERS AND PROVIDE CITY-SPONSORED PARKING FACILITIES TO MINIMIZE THE NUMBER OF PARKING LOTS AND CURB CUTS ALONG UNIVERSITY AVENUE. ALSO, STRONGLY ENCOURAGE PROPERTY OWNERS WITH EXISTING STREET-EDGE PARKING LOTS TO PROVIDE DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS WHICH ENHANCE (RATHER THAN BLOCK) THE VIEW OF THE LOTS.

Strategy 22A: Conduct a Comprehensive Parking Study to identify the level of need, appropriate locations and key opportunities for a number of small, strategically located parking facilities, in addition to the large structure under consideration for the Fourth Street area. As part of the study, develop a self-supporting financing plan.

Strategy 22B: Review Zoning Ordinance to remove barriers to providing shared parking, including considering reduced parking requirements for uses with complementary peak parking needs.

Strategy 22C: Require parking lot enhancements (such as low hedges, fences, trees, or trellises) in conjunction with renovations and new buildings.

Strategy 22D: Create safe and visually appealing pedestrian linkages between parking lots/structures and the commercial districts.

Strategy 22E: Provide readily visible signs and other urban design improvements to announce both private and public parking lot locations.

Community Services

Setting and Issues

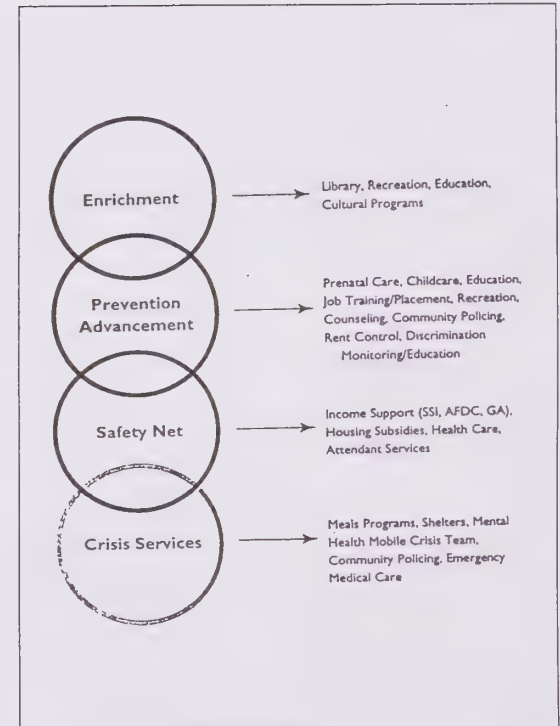
Like most major urban corridors in the Bay Area, and the United States generally, University Avenue is home to a diverse group of health and social service organizations. Many of these organizations do the important job of helping to stabilize and enrich the lives of adult and youth residents of the area and other parts of the City. Religious organizations and nonprofit groups constitute the bulk of service providers in the University Avenue corridor. Many of them serve both general and special-needs populations through a variety of health, social, educational and vocational services.

In order to respond to community concerns for information regarding types and uses of social services, and to develop social service strategies and actions, staff from the Planning and Development and Health and Human Services Departments developed a profile of the 32 existing social services in the planning area together with location maps by sub-area.

One of the first challenges was to define what constitutes a social service along the corridor and then to develop the appropriate level of detail about each of the respective agencies and their clients. The profile of social services along University Avenue includes a range of social services from primary prevention at the West Berkeley Health Clinic to crisis resolution at the Family Violence Law Center.

As seen in the accompanying matrix, social services have been categorized by agency, description of services, levels of service, target population, clients served and residence.¹⁴ These tables use the City's draft General Plan concept of four service level categories: Enrichment, Prevention/Advancement, Safety Net and Crisis.

Ten of the service providers offer Enrichment services which include the library, recreation, education and cultural programs. Twenty-seven of the providers offer Prevention/Advancement services such as prenatal care, child care, education, job training, recreation, counseling, and community policing. Twenty-four offer Safety Net



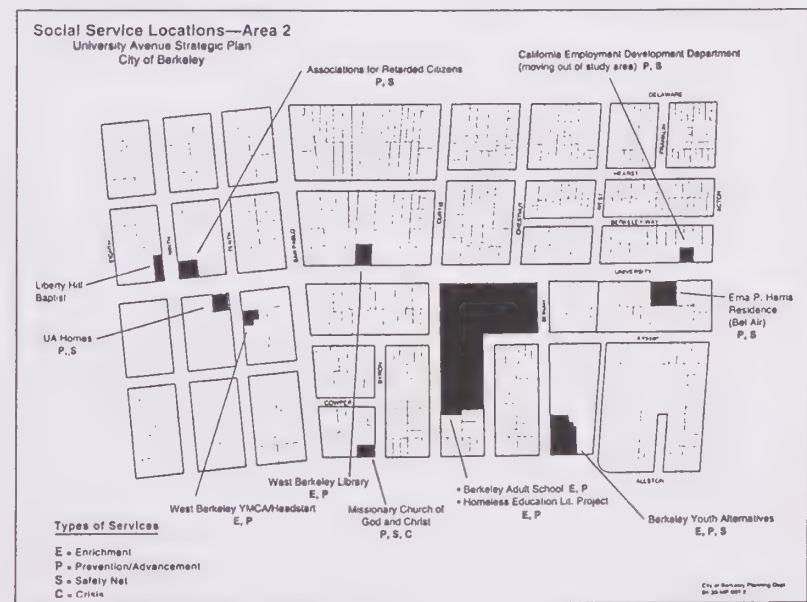
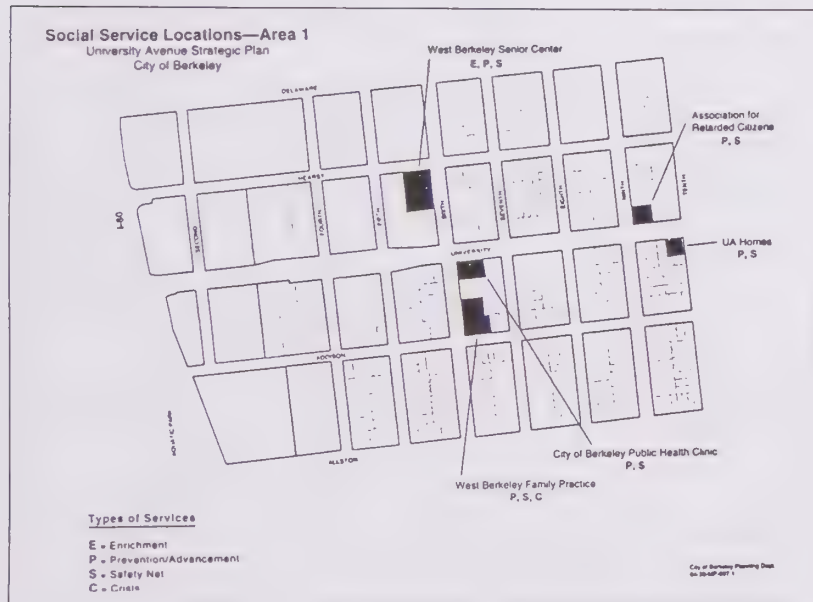
services related to income support (SSI, AFDC, GA), housing subsidies, health care, and attendant services. Nine of the service providers offer Crisis services such as meals, shelters, mental health mobile crisis, community policing and emergency medical care.

The majority of these providers, 13 in number or 41%, are located in the Downtown, with the remainder distributed accordingly: 5 (16%) in Sub-Area Three; 11 (34%) in Sub-Area Two; and 5 (16%) in Sub-Area One. Geographically-specific data describing these social service providers was gathered by interview for the planning area only. Given the scope of this study, similar data could not be gathered on a city-wide level for purposes of comparison.

During one of the community meetings, participants identified what they perceived to be the positive and negative impacts of social service delivery in the study area.

Positive impacts of community services include:

- Provides a place for people to go;
- Creates “eyes on the neighborhood;”
- Provides a stabilizing influence for low income populations;
- People are taken off the street and given a place to live;
- Provides an opportunity to volunteer and give back to the community;
- Creates meaningful jobs that build self-esteem;
- Services enhance quality of life and community self-esteem; and
- Social services support people who do not have available family resources.

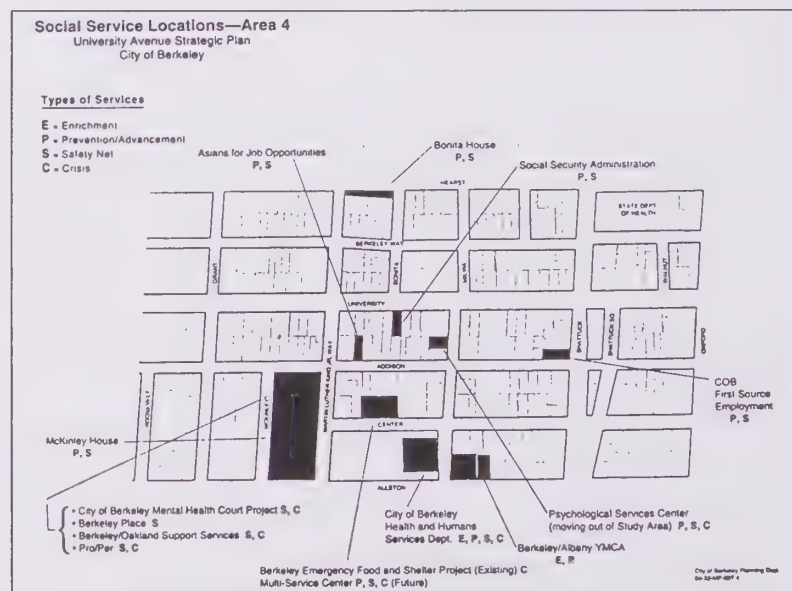
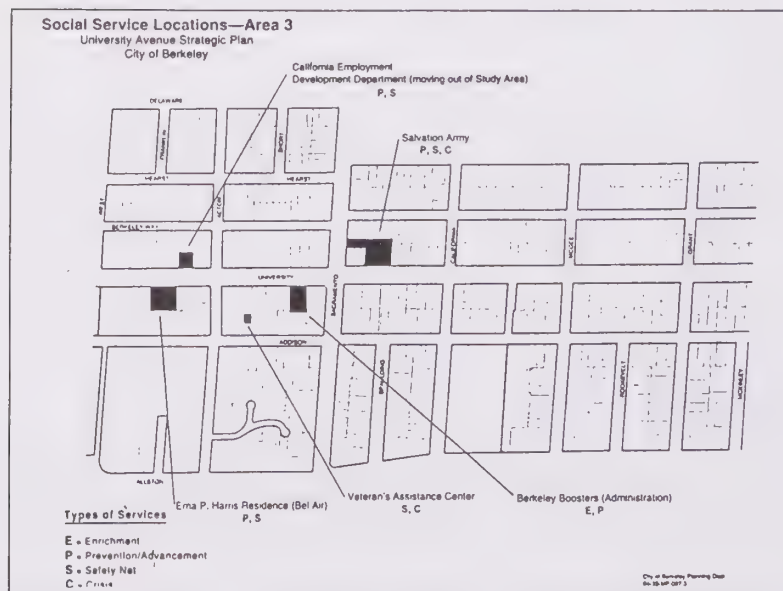


Negative impacts of community services include:

- There is an over concentration of social services in the study area; these services create safety problems and effect economic and residen-tial opportunities.
- The community is paying for services that are being abused by some individuals, creating a co-dependence; there is a “selective use of social programs that allow people to stay on the streets.”
- Some individuals remain on same corner for years without any action from the providers; nobody even knows their names (service resistant individuals).
- City governments cannot control “regulars” who float from one com-munity to the other; there are no agreements between communities.

- People using the services are not the problem; service delivery needs to be improved (through greater input from and coordination with the community).
- Berkeley has assumed responsibility for more than its regional “fair share” of social services.

After examining the range of community services in detail, it be-came clear that the issues raised during this planning process are of city-wide and regional significance and are not limited to the University Avenue area. There was general agreement that improved city-wide siting, plan-ning and monitoring of social service programs is required. The existing data reflects a concentration of safety net and crisis services in the Down-town section of the study area relative to other parts of the City. Any future



siting of social service programs in the study area take into account the economic impact of such programs on the vitality of the area. In developing a set of broad recommendations, community concern generally centered around: how programs are sited in the City; the cumulative impact of special needs populations; monitoring and evaluation; the level of community outreach; program development; the coordination of services; and the need for other communities to provide their “fair share” of crisis level social services.

These recommendations also reflect much of what the private and public sectors have been identifying as important to the delivery of public services: accountability, responsible management and the most cost-effective delivery of services possible.

The City is currently updating the General Plan in which there will be a Community Services section to address many of the city-wide issues raised in the University Avenue Plan. The following strategies should be incorporated into the Community Services section of the General Plan. Furthermore, these strategies should also be used as a basis for the internal evaluation now underway in the Health and Human Services Department, which is responsible for the delivery and coordination of many of the City’s community services.

Community Service Policies and Strategies

(Note: Those strategies that are recommended for city-wide implementation are identified with a *; all others are intended to be specific to University Avenue.)

POLICY 23: COORDINATE PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ALL EXISTING AND PROPOSED PROGRAMS

Strategy 23A: *The City should develop city-wide policies to address the siting, planning, monitoring and evaluation of social service and housing programs. In order to assess the positive and negative impacts of these city-wide programs, and particularly along the University Avenue corridor, the City should commission an independent report to help in the development of policies and strategies to minimize the adverse impacts and maximize the benefits to program participants.

Strategy 23B: *Review the evaluation and assessment process for social services.

Strategy 23C: *Conduct regular monitoring and program evaluation, including data collection and mechanisms for gathering information about what is and is not working.

Strategy 23D: Examine the following issues specific to the University Avenue corridor: areas of program overlap; levels of efficiency; funding sources; impact on neighborhoods; “fair share” distribution within the city.

POLICY 24: IMPROVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH, INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

Strategy 24A: Conduct periodic neighborhood meetings with neighborhood associations, agencies, service providers and the community to encourage joint problem-solving and to better publicize services.

Strategy 24B: *Conduct periodic outreach to identify problems and public education on how to effectively utilize City resources to resolve problems when local efforts are unsuccessful.

Strategy 24C: Increase the use of mobile intervention units; clearly post crisis phone numbers publicly.

POLICY 25: IMPROVE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Strategy 25A: *Initiate performance/outcome-based programs for all community-based organizations that receive funding through the City.

Strategy 25B: *Work closer with non-profits and community-based organizations on contracts for program development and coordination with the City's Health and Human Services Department, particularly in the areas of case management, data collection, information sharing and referrals.

Strategy 25C: *All development proposals that include special-needs housing should include a plan for health and social services as part of the pro forma.

Strategy 25D: Further promote job development; employ social services recipients and youth to keep the corridor and the city clean.

POLICY 26: FACILITATE BETTER INTRACITY AND INTERAGENCY COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION.

Strategy 26A: *Develop a plan consistent with HUD block granting guidelines for creating improved linkages between private providers, non-profits and public agencies; focus particular attention on County efforts to provide a continuum of care.

Strategy 26B: Target a portion of the Planning and Development, Health and Human Services, and Housing Departments' study (Strategy 23A) to deal specifically with tough problems and service resistant individuals within the University Avenue corridor.

Strategy 26C: *Increase the level of joint training for program management issues and handling difficult clients, e.g. service resistance individuals.

Strategy 26D: *Further develop mechanisms for sharing client information on an interagency basis, consistent with confidentiality requirements.

Strategy 26E: *Strengthen the City's ability to identify problem individuals; strengthen case management and the continuum of care.

Strategy 26F: *Special population housing and service providers must be ready to remove an individual from a housing unit when he/she violates terms of the lease agreement. Consequences must be understood and enforced.

POLICY 27: ENCOURAGE OTHER COMMUNITIES TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR "FAIR SHARE" OF SOCIAL SERVICES.

Strategy 27A: *Develop a fact-based policy position as a basis for dialogue with other cities regarding "fair share" responsibilities.

Strategy 27B: *Encourage the Planning and Development, Health and Human Services and Housing Departments to work together with other cities and the county on joint service planning and evaluation.

Area-Wide Issues and Strategies Footnotes

- 1 See subsequent chapters for additional detailed information on each of these topics.
- 2 All crime data has been provided by the City of Berkeley Police Department.
- 3 Source: "The University Avenue Area Statistical Profile." Prepared by the City of Berkeley Planning Department, January, 1994.
- 4 Data is only available for the census tracts that include the study area.
- 5 County-wide income ranges are used as the standard for low income housing development by federal and state programs, as well as the City of Berkeley's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. Source: 1990 U.S. Census and Bay Area Economics.
- 6 From 1980 to 1990 ownership housing increased at total of 6.2% in the study area vs. 5.8% in the city as a whole.
- 7 In 1990, median contract rents for the study area census tracts were \$364/month as compared with the city-wide median of \$392/month. Source: 1990 U.S. Census and Bay Area Economics.
- 8 Between 1980 and 1990, median contract rents in the study area census tracts increased by 5.7%, as compared with a 5.8% increase city-wide. Source: 1990 U.S. Census and Bay Area Economics.
- 9 In 1995, homeless services within the study area provided 227 of the city's 441 units/beds. A total of 350 of the city's 394 SRO units (not including student housing units and rooming houses) are in the study area. The Bel Air (35 units) and UA Homes (74 units), both considered SRO's, are targeted to the homeless population and are counted in those figures.
- 10 For further information on 1995 crime data analysis and geocoding process for University Avenue see April 22, 1996 memo from Patrick DeTemple to John Ledbetter titled "GIS Request: University Avenue Crime Data."
- 11 New buildings in Avenue Nodes will be required to be a minimum of 2 stores in height and may be a maximum of 5 stories. Buildings in other parts of the Avenue (Avenue Mixed-Use) will be required to be at least 2 stories high and may be a maximum of 3 stories. These heights may only be granted if all other solar, privacy, open space, signage, parking, and design standards are met. Current height requirements allow 3 story buildings to a maximum of 4 stories with a Conditional Use Permit all along the Avenue.
- 12 For purposes of this analysis, "units" defined for homeless populations include shelter beds, transitional housing beds, and rooms in single room occupancy hotels (SROs) which are specifically targeted to homeless populations.
- 13 These units could revert back to the market at any time, should these households choose to move.
- 14 When reviewing the social service matrix, it is important to note that while there are similarities in general types of services, there are also significant differences. The social service matrix provides nominal background information on types of services but it does not provide interval measures of volume or intensity of service in each of these specific categories. Thus, it would be inaccurate to "homogenize," or lump together, service providers based solely on the fact that, for example, they each provide some crisis services. One service provider may provide 20 hours of crisis services, or less than 5% of total service volume, while another may provide 2,000 hours, or more than 50% of total service volume.

SUB-AREA ISSUES AND REVITALIZATION CATALYSTS

Sub-Area 1

Area-Specific Trends and Issues

Sub-Area 1 in West Berkeley is the area which is bounded by the I-80 freeway to the west, Tenth Street to the east, Allston to the south, and Delaware to the north. Sub-Area 1 is also addressed by the West Berkeley Plan which establishes the appropriate mix and location of uses in this area.

Sub-Area 1 has a distinct physical pattern, as compared with other portions of the study area, in part due to its historic origins as a separate community – “Oceanview.” Parcelization varies dramatically, from very large parcels with a single industrial or commercial use per block to small parcels scaled for single-family homes. Also unique is the area’s block pattern which faces the short side of each block towards University Avenue, creating many street crossings at frequent intervals, whereas the remainder of the blocks along University Avenue are much longer. With industrial, commercial, and residential uses in close proximity, Sub-Area 1 is truly “mixed-use.”



The West University Node has a clustering of Indian merchants that is unique in the Bay Area.



Sub-Area 1 Illustrative

Light industrial uses in Sub-Area 1 are primarily concentrated around the railroad right-of-way, west of Fourth Street, and include a great diversity of manufacturing and distribution businesses, many of which are locally owned and operated. The West Berkeley Plan calls for maintaining and protecting this important economic and job base. Strategic Plan participants specifically called for limiting retail activities south of University Avenue, expanding opportunities for small-scale light industrial and live-work uses, and considering a night club or other entertainment use that would bolster nightlife in the area.

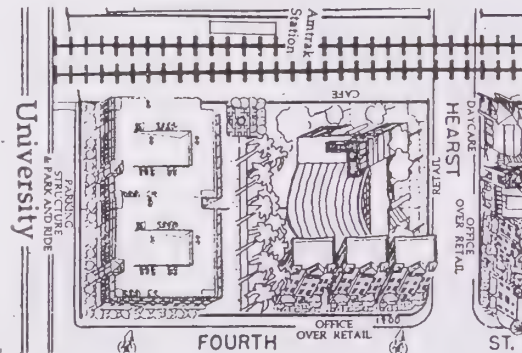
There are two major concentrations of commercial activity in Sub-Area 1: the Fourth Street area north of University Avenue and along the Avenue itself. Fourth Street, north of University, is a thriving mixed-use (primarily commercial and office) shopping street which is anchored to the south by Spenger's Restaurant and extends to the north with smaller shops, offices, and other eating and drinking establishments. This higher-end mix of restaurants, boutiques, and businesses draws from a regional clientele. The abundance of parking and proximity to the freeway make this area a prime shopping and entertainment destination. Along University Avenue between Seventh Street and San Pablo Avenue, there are a number of Indian merchants that serve a broad regional market, selling specialty food, jewelry, appliances, music, books, clothing, and other goods. This clustering of ethnic merchants is unique within the Bay Area and should be protected and nurtured. The western portion of

University Avenue also contains several additional businesses that cater to more than just the immediate neighborhood, including Amsterdam Art, gas stations, antique stores, electronic supplies, and others.

During the University Avenue Strategic Plan process, a key issue raised by the community regarding land use in Sub-Area 1 concerned the tension between the regional-serving nature of retail uses in the area west of San Pablo and the community's interest in creating opportunities for

neighborhood-serving retail, continued light industrial, and artist uses. The West Berkeley Plan provides for continued light-industrial, service commercial, and retail activities within this area. The primary issue affecting the University Avenue Strategic Plan is how to accommodate the needs of regional serving users for increased parking while ensuring that the character of the surrounding neighborhood is protected.

Housing is located throughout Sub-Area 1. West of Sixth Street, residential and live-work uses are scattered among industrial uses, a reminder of the area's former residential past. East of Sixth Street, one block on either side of University Avenue, the fabric is defined by a fine-grained residential neighborhood with several churches and public buildings. While portions of these residential neighborhoods are quite stable, conditions vary on a block-by-block basis. A number of sites contain run-down and very dilapidated housing in great need of either renovation or replacement.



Spenger's parking lot has been suggested in the West Berkeley Redevelopment Plan as a prime location for a new parking structure, a future train station, a Shuttle stop, as well as retail and office space.



Existing bike access under Highway 80 overpass.

Traffic, transit service, bicycle access, and pedestrian safety are all factors affecting Sub-Area 1. By virtue of its access to I-80, University Avenue is one of the city's primary gateways. Yet there is no indication that one has entered Berkeley until at least San Pablo Avenue. Instead, this portion of the Avenue is dominated by speeding cars and heavily congested intersections. Signage at the I-80 ramps and the frontage road should be improved to help direct Fourth Street traffic off of University Avenue and alleviate congestion at 6th Street. Left turn arrows at 6th Street and at San Pablo would help further reduce the stack-up at these intersections. And, to make pedestrian crossings easier, special crosswalks and extended curbs should be provided at each intersection.

University Avenue west of Sixth Street becomes an overpass leading to the Interstate 80 freeway on-ramps and to the Berkeley waterfront.

This part of the Avenue acts as a significant physical and visual barrier for both pedestrians and autos. Access between the north and south sides of the street now only occurs at Second and Fourth Streets. These dark passageways are uninviting and unsafe for pedestrians.

Aquatic Park, an underutilized park and lake, is also located in Sub-Area 1. Due to the widening of I-80 now in progress, there is no longer any visual or acoustic barrier between the freeway and the park. The City is currently working with a consultant to develop an appropriate noise barrier which will be funded by CalTrans as part of the mitigation measures for the widening.

Sub-Area 1 Revitalization Catalysts

The following map illustrates recommended interventions (or revitalization catalysts) on opportunity sites within Sub-Area 1. For the purposes of this plan, "Opportunity Sites" represent locations where significant renovations or new construction may occur over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan. "Revitalization Catalysts" are projects that were either in process at this time this plan was being prepared, or should be considered as important first steps for implementation of the University Avenue Strategic Plan. In some cases a "catalyst" is not a physical building, but an economic development or social service program.

- Spenger's parking lot on Fourth Street between Hearst and University Avenue has been suggested in the West Berkeley Redevelopment Plan as a prime location for a new parking structure that would serve both local parking needs in and around Fourth Street and satellite parking for Downtown and U.C. Berkeley commuters. The facility could also include a future train station for a regional transit connection via Amtrak, a platform for a CalTrain-

type service, as well as a major stop and transfer point for the University Avenue Electric Shuttle. There is also sufficient land on this property to incorporate a mix of office, ground floor retail, entertainment, and outdoor plazas. Workshop participants expressed a concern that any new development on the site should fit with the scale of the surrounding area and not tower over the University Avenue overpass. To facilitate easy freeway access, the design should consider the feasibility of a special off-ramp connection into the parking structure. As an initial first step, a Master Plan should be prepared for this site.

- Work with property owners and merchants in the Fourth Street Node to ensure that the mix of uses remains economically healthy. Encourage additional infill.

- Consistent with the “West Berkeley Plan,” the City should limit expansion of specialty retail south of University and west of Fourth Street and encourage infill with new light industrial, small-scale office, and live-work uses. Consider amending the “West Berkeley Plan” to permit nighttime entertainment uses to locate in this area.
- Use the City of Berkeley Business Attraction Program to encourage new ethnically-oriented businesses to locate in the West University Node.
- Target a Residential Rehab Program to two locations within Sub-Area 1: the very dilapidated buildings at Ninth and Delaware and the blocks surrounding Columbus School.



University Avenue overpass looking south

- Upgrade and renovate the primary care facility at 6th and University (West Berkeley Family Practice).
- Signage at the I-80 ramps and the frontage road should be improved to help direct Fourth Street traffic off of University Avenue and alleviate congestion at 6th Street. Left turn arrows at 6th Street and at San Pablo would also help further reduce the stack-up at these intersections. And, to make pedestrian crossings easier, special crosswalks and extended curbs should be provided at each intersection.
- One of the most significant projects planned in Sub-Area 1 is a pedestrian and bicycle connection to the waterfront. Two alignments have been considered for this connection, an extension of Hearst Street or a linkage through Aquatic Park. This Strategic Plan recommends making the connection through Aquatic Park as

part of a broader effort to revitalize this urban open space. Related to this project is the noise barrier currently being designed along Highway 80 between the freeway and the park.

- Improve the physical connection under the University Avenue overpass at Fourth and Fifth Streets by installing appropriate lighting and painting the underside of the overpass a light color. Consider this area as a possible location for permitted graffiti or murals.
- Sub-Area 1 represents an important gateway to the city of Berkeley. A design competition should be held to define an appropriate gateway symbol. One suggestion is a grove of redwood or other distinctive trees within Aquatic Park at the University Avenue exit; another suggestion included banners and other gateway structures along the University Avenue Bridge and up to San Pablo Avenue, or a piece of public art in the University Avenue median.

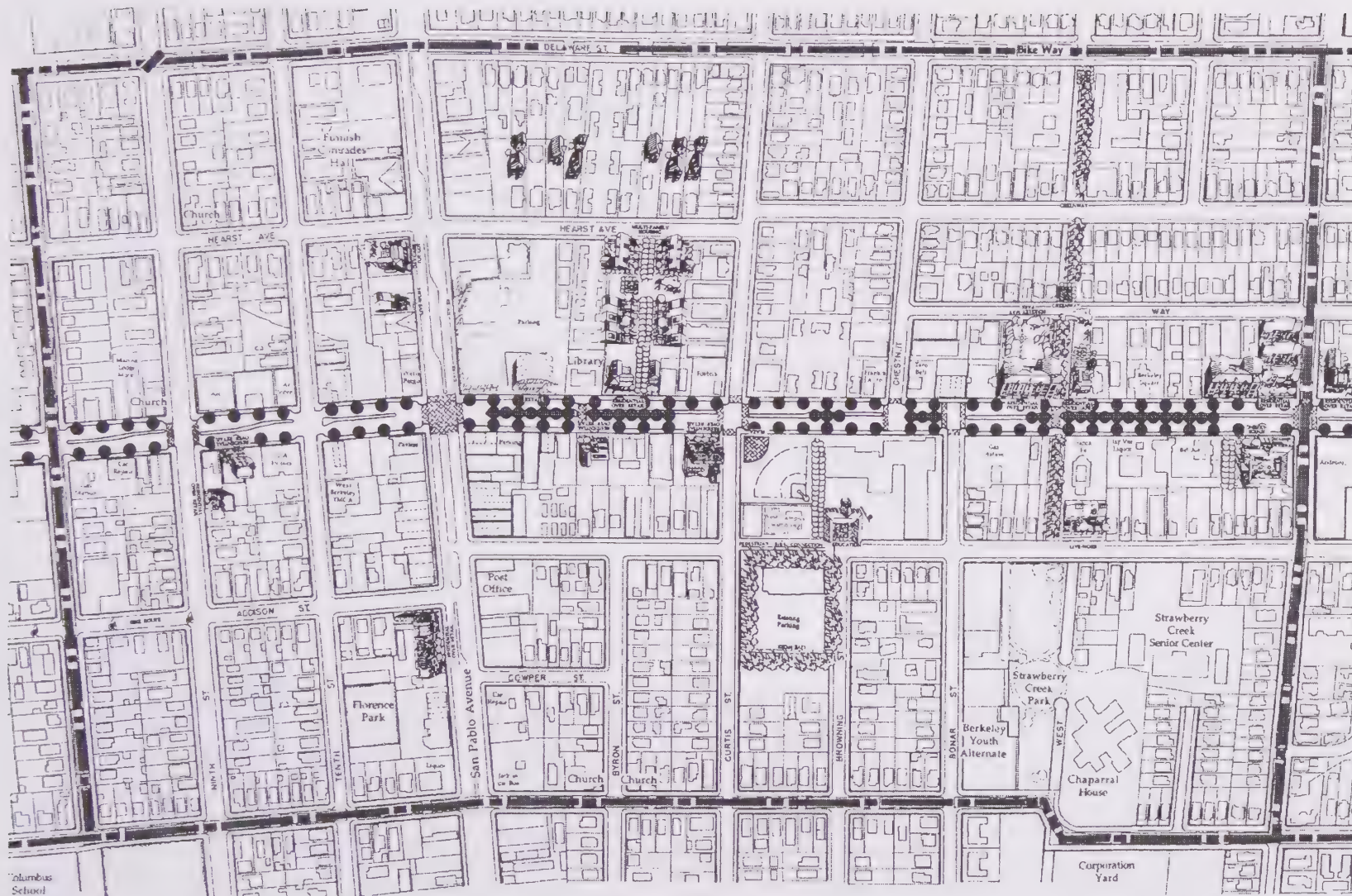
Sub-Area 2

Area-Specific Trends and Issues

Sub-Area 2 is the area along University Avenue which is bounded by Eighth Street to the west, Acton Street to the east, Allston to the south and Delaware to the north.

San Pablo Avenue is the commercial heart of this area and has recently experienced something of a renaissance. There is a wide variety of stores and businesses along San Pablo, including local-serving convenience shops, small restaurants and cafes, a bank, post office, discount households supplies, drug store, liquor store, car repair, and a U-Haul rental outlet. Anchors such as Bay Foods, Country Cheese, the Tea Spot, Middle Eastern Market, and Smart & Final serve pedestrians and transit-oriented customers, as well as residents of surrounding neighborhoods. This tree-lined avenue is both pedestrian-friendly in its fine-grained scale and a major auto/transit thoroughfare. Most older buildings come to the street edge and create a very active pedestrian environment. However, several of the more recently built structures place parking lots at the street edge, thus detracting from an otherwise healthy atmosphere.

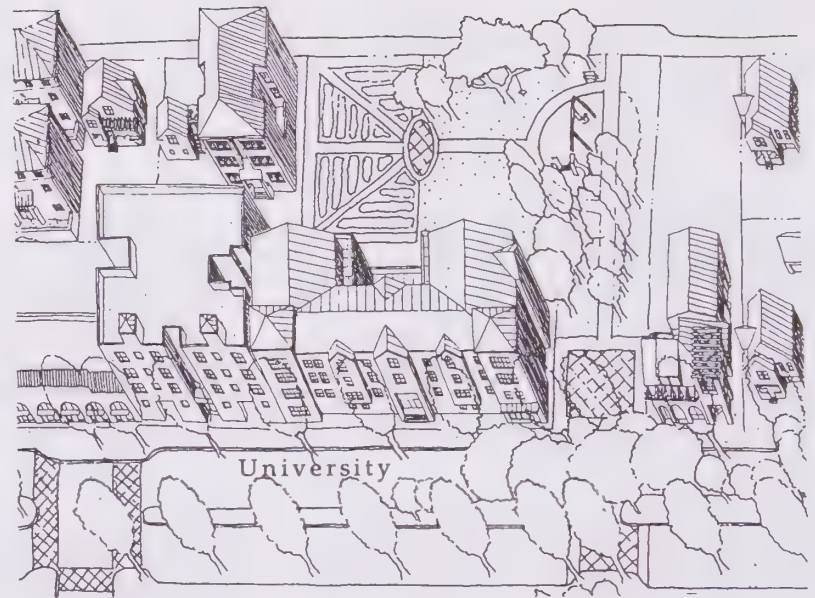




Sub-Area 2 Illustrative

University Avenue between San Pablo and Acton is dominated by rundown businesses, vacant lots and storefronts, a scattering of older apartment buildings, fast food outlets, and liquor stores. The Berkeley Plaza Motel site on University between San Pablo and Curtis has been closed for some time and represents a significant development opportunity site. Additionally, the intersection of Acton and University comprises one of the most important opportunity areas within the area. It is possible that three of this intersection's four corners will go on the market for future development and include a State of California public health facility that is closing, the State of California Employment Development Department offices which are relocating to Oakland, Ledger's liquor store, and a small building with a restaurant. This corner's proximity to the Andronico's supermarket and the newly developed "Strawberry Walk" shops make it an excellent candidate for a catalyst project.

West Campus, formerly part of Berkeley High School, is the largest single use within the University Avenue corridor. The site occupies close to two blocks of the central part of this sub-area. The 10,000 or so students that attend the Adult Education Center support the local businesses and approximately half of the students come from the Berkeley community. The programs that are provided include an academic program, English as a second language, career/prep. vocational education, program for older adults, a severely handicapped program, and community service special courses. The school uses all of its 42 classrooms, but several of the older buildings on the site are unsafe and under-utilized. The campus is equipped with a cafeteria/kitchen, an auditorium, wood shop, gym, a 600 seat theater and a swimming pool. The school provides meals and daycare. Two portions of the site are underutilized: a former playground that faces University Avenue at the corner of Curtis Street and the southern half of the site south of Addison Street between Curtis and Browning.



Andronico's supermarket, at University and Acton, functions as the Acton Street node's primary destination. Its success demonstrates the feasibility of local-serving shopping along University Avenue, although the store probably draws from a much larger market area. Its design also works with the neighborhood, in that auto and pedestrian access is provided from both the Avenue and from Addison, allowing neighbors to easily walk or drive to the store without having to get onto University. The Acton Street Node presents a major opportunity along the University Avenue Corridor and is within walking distance of the North Berkeley BART station. One parcel, a State-owned health facility, is potentially available to the City as surplus property. The Employment Development Department is planning to move out of the area within the next year and may become a second

opportunity site. In the future, other sites within this node may also be placed on the market for new development. The Acton Street node should be made a top priority for the development of new housing targeted to a mix of incomes and a priority location for completion of the University Avenue streetscape improvements.

This portion of the Avenue also includes several additional public uses and parks, including the West Berkeley Library, Berkeley Way Park, and Strawberry Creek Park. Behind University, to the south, are several higher density residential complexes, including Strawberry Creek Senior Center, U.C. faculty housing on the former Preservation High School site, the Bonar Street housing project, and the Chaparral House. There are also a number of public buildings, including the Chinese Community Center, St. Joseph's school and church, and Berkeley Youth Alternatives. The Strawberry Creek Design Center, located in a set of renovated warehouses that face the park, represents the area's only office use. To the north of University Avenue, the fabric is defined by a fine-grained neighborhood of bungalows and small apartment buildings.

A unique feature of Sub-Area 2 is the former railroad right-of-way that extends from Strawberry Creek Park to the historic train station (now the Santa Fe Bar & Grill), and across University Avenue to follow the mapped, but unimproved West Street right-of-way. Currently, each

segment of this right-of-way is fenced off to prevent loitering, but it provides an opportunity to bring a "green" corridor into and through University Avenue.

There are two major projects currently underway in Sub-Area 2. These are the retail project at the corner of San Pablo and University Av-

enues, which will house a video store, a sandwich shop, and another small tenant, and the rehabilitation of the Bel Air Motel into Single Room Occupancy units.

Sub-Area 2 Revitalization Catalysts

The Sub-Area 2 map illustrates recommended interventions (or revitalization catalysts) on opportunity sites within Sub-Area 2. For the purposes of this plan, "Opportunity Sites" represent locations where significant renovations or new construction may occur over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan.

"Revitalization Catalysts" are projects that were either in process at this time this plan was being prepared, or should be considered as important first steps for implementation of the University Avenue Strategic Plan. In some cases a "catalyst" is not a physical building, but an economic development or social service program.



The West Campus Adult Education Center is a significant neighborhood asset. A Master Plan, jointly prepared by the School District would set an agenda for future renovations.

- San Pablo Avenue retail is a good example of local-serving retail and is a major asset to the neighborhood. Every effort should be made to maintain the local-serving nature of businesses in this area, particularly the food-related anchor tenants. New uses, such as a produce market or bakery, could provide additional anchors to this already active retail node.
- A facade renovation program should be targeted to merchants and property owners along San Pablo. The design of new structures should fit with the historic character of the street.
- Undertake a pilot program to “Grow A Business” in the San Pablo node, focusing on developing an opportunity for a produce market.
- The Acton/University Avenue node should receive the City’s highest priority in terms of planning, development review, streetscape improvements, and funding considerations because of its potential to truly transform the mid-section of University Avenue. Focus on building additional housing in this node.
- Work with property owners to identify potential tenants for Strawberry Walk and support the economic viability of Andronico’s.
- The Berkeley Plaza Motel on University Avenue next to the library is a major opportunity site. One of the few large parcels that extends through the block to Hearst Avenue, its location in an area that is struggling makes it a potential anchor of stability. The City should work with property owners to prepare a plan for the site that includes a mixed-use development, with urban housing and ground floor retail that faces University. The portion of the site that faces onto Hearst should be lower in massing and scale to respect the surrounding neighborhood. A mix of unit types, rental and ownership housing, and incomes should be accommodated in any project proposed for this location. A central public plaza and/or through-block walking connection should also be considered.



University Avenue, particularly from Chestnut to Acton Streets, needs general clean-up, building renovation, and a strong emphasis on obtaining new, more local-serving tenants. Every effort should be made to encourage new housing within this sub-area as a strategy for building in a permanent customer-base for nearby businesses.

- The West Campus Adult Education Center is a significant neighborhood asset that also generates customers for local businesses. Many nearby residents expressed an interest in working with the Adult School to make it more accessible to the surrounding community, while maintaining its primary mission as an educational facility. In addition to the need for building renovations, there are at least two underutilized portions of the site that may be opportunities for revitalization. With this in mind, the City should work with the School District to jointly prepare a Master Plan for future rehab and use of West Campus. Particular attention should be directed to improving public access to the play area, creating a permanent pedestrian/bicycle passageway through the site along the Addison Street right-of-way, maintaining the current parking supply, and opening up the recreation facilities to the general public. Coordinate this project with the recommendations of the West Campus Adult School Site Review Committee. Discourage low-income housing on the Adult School parking lot, since there is already a substantial concentration of subsidized, low-cost housing in this area.
- The former railroad right-of-way that extends from Strawberry Creek Park along West Street should be developed as a continuous pedestrian and bicycle oriented greenway. Additionally, several vacant and under-utilized sites along the West Street right-of-way could be developed to create activities that would provide “eyes on the greenway,” (landscaping, bikepaths, lighting, community gardens, totlots, basketball, day care, cafes, etc.). Renovation of the West Street right-of-way should incorporate restoration of Berkeley Way Park.
- Organize a Special Events program for Strawberry Creek Park.
- Target University Avenue, particularly from Chestnut to Acton Streets, for new housing as a strategy for building in a permanent customer-base for nearby businesses.
- Target Bonar/Browning streets neighborhood for Residential Rehab Program.
- Plan and implement a Library Facade Renovation.
- As part of the overall University Avenue Streetscape Enhancement Program, provide an “all way” walk signal at San Pablo and University.
- Acton and Sacramento should be emphasized as important pedestrian routes to BART. Provide special lighting, signage, landscaping, and pedestrian-friendly intersections.

Sub-Area 3

Area-Specific Trends and Issues

Sub-Area 3 is the area along University Avenue which is bounded by West Street to the west, McKinley Street to the east, Allston to the south and Delaware/Hearst to the north. This area has two nodes of business activity that provide local-serving destinations.

Andronico's supermarket at Acton and University functions as this area's primary neighborhood center. It demonstrates the feasibility of local-serving shopping along University Avenue, although the store probably draws from a much larger market area and is not as strong as other stores in this chain. Its design also works with the neighborhood, in that auto and pedestrian access is provided from both the Avenue and from Addison, allowing neighbors to easily walk or drive to the store without having to get onto University. Strawberry Walk, a new retail development adjacent to Andronico's, is not yet leased up, but could serve as an important additional anchor to this node. (See Sub-Area 2 for recommendations related to the Acton Node.)



Living Foods/Wild Oats Market is an important "anchor tenant" for Sub-Area 3. Every effort should be made to retain this and other key tenants.

- The West Campus Adult Education Center is a significant neighborhood asset that also generates customers for local businesses. Many nearby residents expressed an interest in working with the Adult School to make it more accessible to the surrounding community, while maintaining its primary mission as an educational facility. In addition to the need for building renovations, there are at least two underutilized portions of the site that may be opportunities for revitalization. With this in mind, the City should work with the School District to jointly prepare a Master Plan for future rehab and use of West Campus. Particular attention should be directed to improving public access to the play area, creating a permanent pedestrian/bicycle passageway through the site along the Addison Street right-of-way, maintaining the current parking supply, and opening up the recreation facilities to the general public. Coordinate this project with the recommendations of the West Campus Adult School Site Review Committee. Discourage low-income housing on the Adult School parking lot, since there is already a substantial concentration of subsidized, low-cost housing in this area.
- The former railroad right-of-way that extends from Strawberry Creek Park along West Street should be developed as a continuous pedestrian and bicycle oriented greenway. Additionally, several vacant and under-utilized sites along the West Street right-of-way could be developed to create activities that would provide “eyes on the greenway,” (landscaping, bikepaths, lighting, community gardens, totlots, basketball, day care, cafes, etc.). Renovation of the West Street right-of-way should incorporate restoration of Berkeley Way Park.
- Organize a Special Events program for Strawberry Creek Park.
- Target University Avenue, particularly from Chestnut to Acton Streets, for new housing as a strategy for building in a permanent customer-base for nearby businesses.
- Target Bonar/Browning streets neighborhood for Residential Rehab Program.
- Plan and implement a Library Facade Renovation.
- As part of the overall University Avenue Streetscape Enhancement Program, provide an “all way” walk signal at San Pablo and University.
- Acton and Sacramento should be emphasized as important pedestrian routes to BART. Provide special lighting, signage, landscaping, and pedestrian-friendly intersections.

A secondary neighborhood center is emerging at the intersection of University Avenue and California Street. This area already includes a few local-serving businesses, such as a food store, several small furniture stores, and other service-oriented businesses, but it also houses a number of vacant storefronts. Two projects are proposed for the area:

- North Beach Pizza – renovation of the old International House of Pancakes building is currently underway at California and University.
- 1627 University – 36 units of condominium housing with ground floor retail are proposed at this location. As planned, the project will reserve 20% of the units for very low income households (households earning no more than 50% of the Alameda County Area Median Income).

Sacramento Avenue is a four lane residential boulevard that provides a primary link between North Berkeley, BART, and South Berkeley. Although its median is planted with large trees and either side of the street is lined with porches and residential entries, the speeding traffic along Sacramento creates a pedestrian barrier. The walking and bicycling environment further declines at the intersection of University and Sacramento, where automobile serving businesses are placed at each of the four corners (two gas stations, a convenience store, and a video outlet). Here, numerous curb cuts and generous turn lanes make street crossings dangerous. Further, the wide expanses of pavement

(public and private) create more of a void than an urban center within a few short blocks of a major transit hub.

Sub-Area 3 Revitalization Catalysts

The following map illustrates recommended interventions (or revitalization catalysts) on opportunity sites within Sub-Area 3. For the purposes of this plan, “Opportunity Sites” represent locations where significant renovations or new construction may occur over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan.

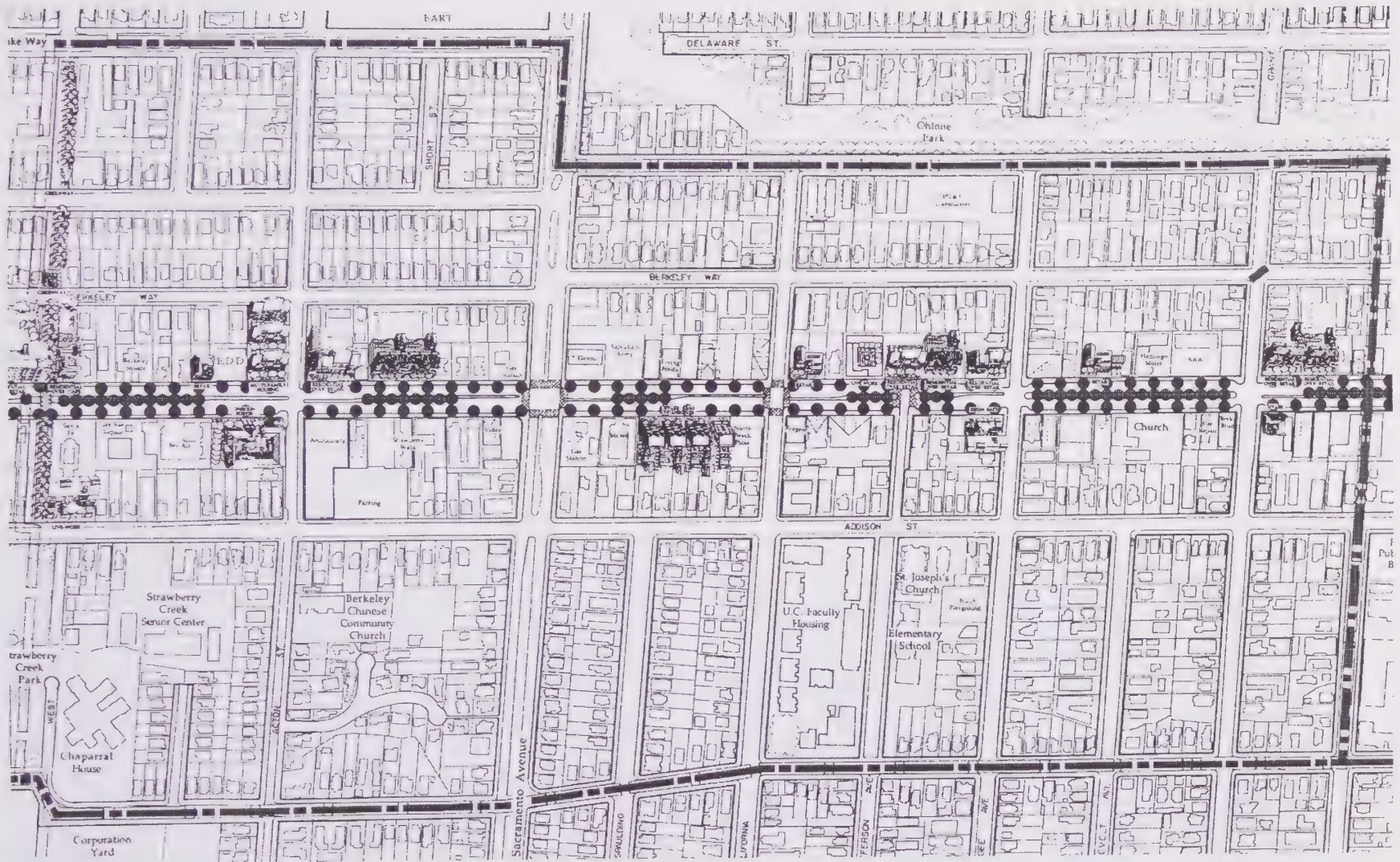
“Revitalization Catalysts” are projects that were either in process at this time this plan was being prepared, or should be considered as important first steps for implementation of the University Avenue Strategic Plan. In some cases a “catalyst” is not a physical building, but an economic development or social service program.

- Create an activity node around California Street. Solicit community-oriented eating and drinking establishments, with full daytime and nighttime service in the area between California and Sacramento, such as coffee shops, bookstores, a “brew on premises” personal brewery, restaurants, and entertainment-oriented uses. Discourage or prohibit additional liquor stores. Due to the area's proximity to BART, it may be an opportunity to draw patrons from the regional transit system and at the same time add vitality to the area.



Ohlone Park is a wonderful neighborhood amenity.

fee shops, bookstores, a “brew on premises” personal brewery, restaurants, and entertainment-oriented uses. Discourage or prohibit additional liquor stores. Due to the area's proximity to BART, it may be an opportunity to draw patrons from the regional transit system and at the same time add vitality to the area.



Sub-Area 3 Illustrative

Sub-Area 4

Area-Specific Trends and Issues

Sub-Area 4 is the area along University Avenue which is bounded by Roosevelt Street to the west, the U.C. Campus to the east, Allston to the south, and Hearst to the north. In terms of long-range planning, part of Sub-Area 4 is also addressed by the Downtown Plan, the Downtown Public Improvements Plan, and the Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines. The findings and proposals of these plans and guidelines are incorporated into this plan by reference, except as noted. The Civic Center Master Plan is being prepared simultaneously with this plan and the findings of each have been coordinated.

This area from the U.C. Campus to Martin Luther King Jr. Way, is a dense, fine-grained, mixed-use neighborhood which provides pedestrian-oriented commercial services. The area is anchored by the UC Theater and is supported by a number of restaurants, such as Au Coquelet and Plearn Thai Cuisine, among others; however, the many vacant storefronts in this block impair the viability of drawing new tenants to the area. These blocks also include a number of upper story office spaces, apartment buildings, and both operating and vacant Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels.



- Work with property owners and merchants to retain existing local-serving businesses in the California Node.
- Improve the signage and pedestrian connections to the North Berkeley BART station along Sacramento and California. This provides a significant opportunity that is not presently captured by either current land use patterns or the area's street design.
- Ohlone Park is a wonderful neighborhood amenity. Access to and from the park should also be reinforced with pedestrian/bicycle friendly features.
- Kelley Moore Paints, the U.C. Cafe, and several other underutilized businesses could also be redeveloped or renovated that would further enhance the Avenue's important role in the City.
- Do not permit additional gas stations within this area, and work to redevelop the stations at the intersection of Sacramento and University to higher intensity, transit-oriented office, retail and residential uses.

Of the many three- to six-story brick buildings that line the street, some have been renovated and seismically updated, while others have languished due to the exorbitant cost of retrofitting and the lack of funding. In particular, two SROs have been vacant (and seismically damaged) for a number of years and attempts to repair and re-open them have failed; others in this block need substantial maintenance, repairs and modernization. Also, the U.C. Theater, the block's primary entertainment anchor, is seismically damaged and, for economic reasons, may wish to add additional screens in the future. All of these factors combine to affect both the vitality of Downtown and the safety and security of nearby neighborhoods.

Several other planning and revitalization efforts are on-going within this area, including the "Civic Center Master Plan," which addresses the issues of seismic safety, urban design, and the siting of new civic facilities; the Downtown Arts District, which aims to make Addison Street and the area around the Berkeley Repertory Theater a new destination in downtown; and the "Downtown Public Improvements Plan," which calls for a wide variety of streetscape improvements on major streets in downtown.

Oxford Street, which is the edge of the U.C. campus, includes a mix of University-related offices, some retail, restaurants, underutilized structures, warehouses, and parking lots. High density apartments are located north and south of the study area along Oxford.

A concentration of residential uses within Sub-Area 4 is located west of Martin Luther King Jr. Way, just one block north and south of University. As in the other Sub-Areas, these neighborhoods are made up of a healthy mix of single-family bungalows, duplexes, and small apartment buildings.

Sub-Area 4 Revitalization Catalysts

The illustrative map opposite illustrates recommended interventions (or revitalization catalysts) on opportunity sites within Sub-Area 4.

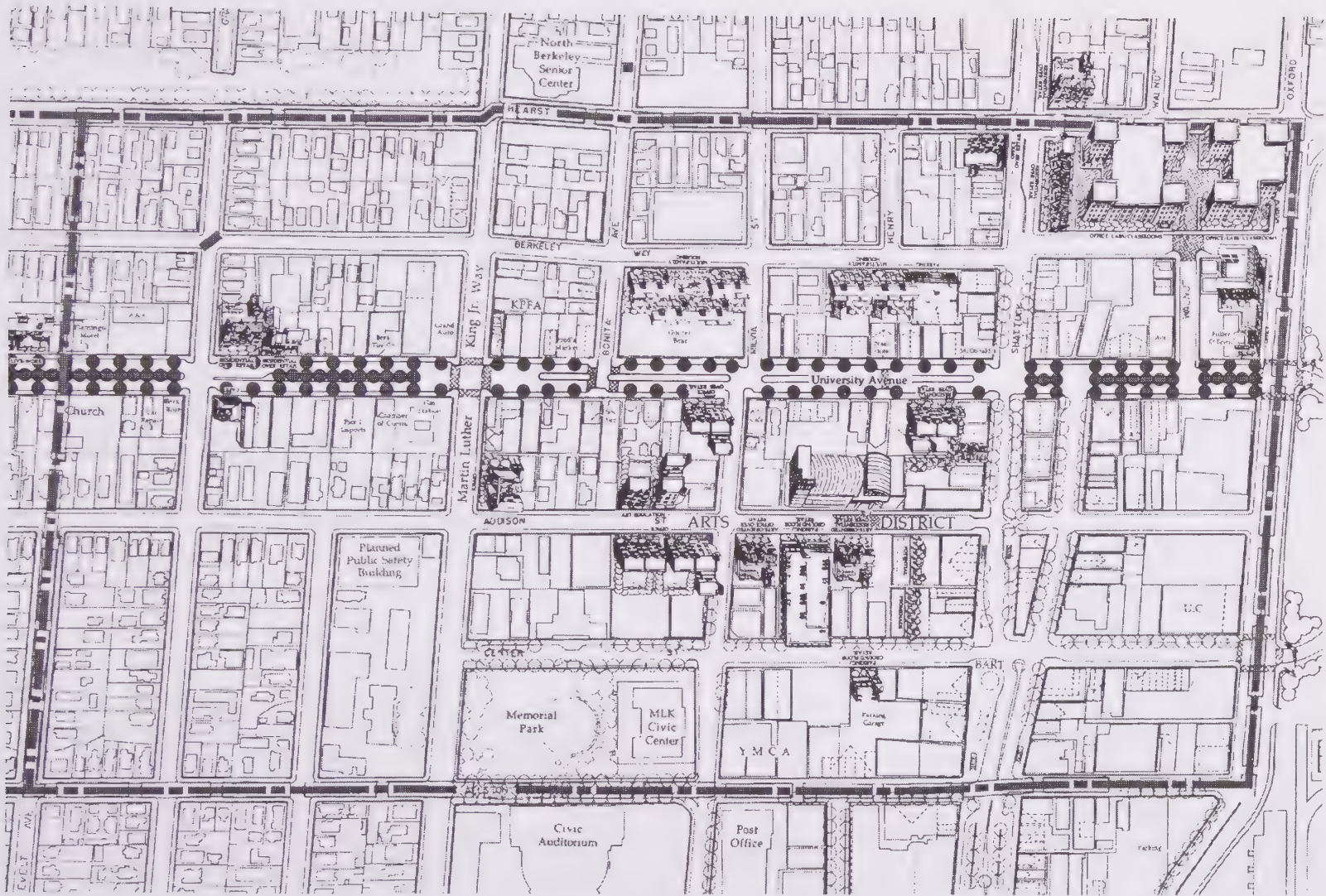
For the purposes of this plan, "Opportunity Sites" represent locations where significant renovations or new construction may occur over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan. "Revitalization Catalysts" are projects that were either in process at this time this plan was being prepared, or should be considered as important first steps for implementation of the University Avenue Strategic Plan. In some cases a "catalyst" is not a physical building, but an economic development or social service program.

- The UC Theater is this sub-area's primary anchor along University Avenue and draws a strong customer base from within Berkeley and from a wider regional area. It is

seismically damaged and may want to add additional screens in the future. Every effort should be made to retain this important use and assist with future building improvements.



UC Theater is the anchor use in Sub-Area 4. Despite its notoriety, the building is seismically damaged and needs repairs.



Sub-Area 4 Illustrative

DESIGN GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to implement the Strategic Plan policies and promote safe, livable, and attractive streets by encouraging high-quality architecture and landscaping. They also establish walkable districts by:

- encouraging nodes of mixed-use activity (residential or office over retail and live/work),
- promoting urban intensities around these nodes,
- advocating pedestrian-oriented amenities and
- requiring streets to be fronted with visually interesting entries and facades.

As part of a new Zoning Overlay system, this plan recommends that the University Avenue Corridor be divided into three “designation” types. These designations are based upon area character, building type, and the desired mix of uses and should be considered as an overlay to the base zoning. The zoning overlay system should not be confused with the Sub-Areas descriptions of the preceding pages, which are based upon specific segments of the University Avenue Corridor.

As part of a new Zoning Overlay, the University Avenue Corridor has been given three “designation” types: Avenue Nodes, Avenue Residential, and Neighborhood Residential.



- This section of University Avenue is part of a larger entertainment focus to Downtown Berkeley and, thus, should be maintained and enhanced. A mix of live-entertainment uses, such as music bars, cafes, brew pubs, and restaurants, should be encouraged. New businesses that can provide name recognition and lend instant credibility for visitors, such as Peets Coffee or other Berkeley-grown businesses, would help strengthen the UC Theater's position in the regional market.
- Along this section of University Avenue, several older buildings have recently been upgraded and renovated, while others are run-down, underutilized, or vacant. Target the Milvia to Shattuck block of University Avenue for use of the Seismic Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund, Facade Improvement Grants, and the Rental Acquisition Program, as well as stronger enforcement of the Anti-Blight Ordinance and other City codes. If successful, the program should be extended to the block between Shattuck and Oxford. In addition, new tenants should be solicited for buildings in this segment.
- Allow those SRO units that have been vacant for a number of years (approximately 55 units) to be considered for alternative uses and support the rehabilitation of the remaining 81 units. (See also Housing Policies, Strategy 15F.)
- The State Department of Health facility, located behind University and bounded by Shattuck, Oxford, Hearst and Berkeley Way, is planning to move to Richmond. Redevelopment of the site would provide a significant opportunity to fill in a major gap in the pattern of pedestrian-oriented retail uses fronting on Shattuck. Its location along Shattuck and between the U.C. campus and a multi-family residential neighborhood makes it an important transition project that will require a high level of design sensitivity. The University of California's Long Range Development Plans for the Berkeley Campus designates the site as a potential joint development opportunity site. Along Shattuck a private retail, mixed-use Shattuck frontage development could serve to continue the pedestrian oriented uses along North Shattuck to University Avenue. A University development could help to replace the lost economic activity generated by the estimated 650 employees in the existing facility, as well as providing an opportunity to bring "activity generating" street level uses to the Downtown area, such as a visitor center, meeting spaces, service facilities, or a museum. If this site is considered for development by the University, the City should work with it to jointly develop a master plan and design guidelines for the site.
- Provide incentives for constructing housing and live-work opportunities in Downtown. Possible strategies might include reduced parking requirements, waived permit processing fees and/or financial assistance with seismic upgrades.
- Target the City's Berkeley Way parking lot as a primary for redevelopment with mixed-use buildings with primarily housing and replacement parking. The Oxford Street parking lot should be considered as a second priority.
- In this Sub-Area there are several additional sites that are underutilized, including several existing office buildings along Oxford Street, and older auto-service uses along Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Their proximity to the Arts District and downtown makes these sites excellent opportunities for high density, arts-related, mixed-use projects.
- Secure a Mid-block Pedestrian Passageway between the City's Berkeley Way parking lot and University Avenue.
- Continue to implement the Arts District plan for Addison Street and the "Civic Center Master Plan."
- Work with U.C. to plan a "Campus Gateway" at Oxford and University. The city should take the lead in planning for a "Downtown Gateway" at MLK Way or Milvia and University Avenue.

GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

(Applying to all designations)

Integration

The built environment along University Avenue reflects the fascinating and diverse history of Berkeley. From the stately neoclassical buildings in Downtown Berkeley, to the factories in West Berkeley, the physical environment is a built record of the past. New developments can jeopardize the integrity of the neighborhood unless they are sensitive and respectful of the existing fabric and design with their neighbors and the community in mind. The design of a new project must pay attention to the siting, physical characteristics, and sun orientation of both buildings immediately adjacent to it, as well as those nearby.

Siting - The siting of a proposed project must be carefully designed so as to minimize its impact on the air and light of adjacent building and to utilize the best features of the property. The location of parking lots, living units, outdoor spaces, and storage must be taken into consideration to avoid the negative impacts that a new development can have on the existing community. A well-sited building can be improved by combining efforts with a neighboring building. For example, courtyards can be grouped together to create an open space that is twice as large, while shared parking can reduce the redundancies of driveways and parking spaces.

Physical Characteristics - A new building need not imitate existing buildings, but at a minimum should maintain the overall proportions, articulation and defining features of other similar building types along the corridor. Respecting cornice, base, and trim lines,



This water tower, which is a built record of Berkeley's past, is well integrated into this professional office complex.

These buildings on University Avenue demonstrate the lack of harmony that is the result of projects that are not well integrated.

These guidelines are intended to supplement and complement the already approved design guidelines for the City, including the “Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines” and the Design Review Ordinance. Please refer to the Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines and the “Downtown Public Improvements Plan” for projects in the downtown area and to the Design Review Ordinance for projects in other locations.



San Pablo Avenue is one of six Avenue Nodes in the University Avenue Corridor Area.

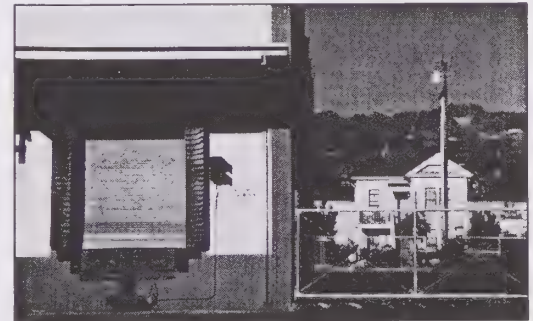
Within the Design Guidelines, it is necessary to read the information in both the General Design Guidelines section and the Specific Designation Design Guidelines section for any given project. The General Design Guidelines apply to all designations. The Specific Design designations are as follows:

Avenue Node - The six nodes that have been identified as target areas for higher-intensity mixed-use buildings are designated “Avenue Nodes.” These Nodes are as follows: 1) Fourth Street in West Berkeley, 2) West University Avenue, 3) San Pablo Avenue, 4) University at Acton Street, 5) University at California Street and 6) Downtown.

Avenue Mixed-Use - Lower-scale mixed-use buildings with upper story residential uses will be encouraged in the area between the Avenue Nodes on University Avenue.

Neighborhood Residential - Though the design review process does not currently apply to the city’s established residential neighborhoods, these design guidelines are provided to encourage sensitive building design in the existing fine-grained single, medium and high density residential neighborhoods of the study area.

West Berkeley - This special section is not intended to be a new zoning overlay designation, but is a unique condition within the corridor. These design guidelines cover the area between I-80 and Sixth Street where a mix of light industrial buildings, offices, live-work spaces, and residential units of varying densities are currently located. This neighborhood has a unique character and new development will be guided by special land-use policies included in the “West Berkeley Plan.”



West Berkeley is a mixed-use community containing light industrial buildings, offices, live-work spaces, and residential units of varying densities.

Reuse of Historic and Existing Buildings

There are many historic and older buildings in the University Avenue corridor which contribute to the charming fine-grained fabric that makes up the built environment of Berkeley. For example, a number of beautifully detailed brick buildings, large elegantly trussed factory buildings, and small exquisite churches merit attention. Many of these buildings remain vacant or under-utilized for a variety of reasons. Some are too small for today's retailers, others need seismic retrofitting, and some are designed for uses that are no longer economically viable.

Whenever possible, historic/existing buildings should be retrofitted, restored for their original use, re-configured for a new use, or combined with neighboring buildings to create a larger floor plate. For example, a sensitively designed second floor could be added to a one story building to create additional space, or square footage can be added to a building in the rear or side yards. It is also possible to combine several small buildings to create additional square footage. A vacant church of historical value should be reused, as a daycare center for example, or turned into several units of housing, rather than demolished.

Refer to the Landmark Preservation Ordinance for more guidelines on restoration of landmark buildings and to the Downtown Design Guidelines for landmark and significant buildings in downtown.



Older homes can be renovated to fit the changing needs of today's families.

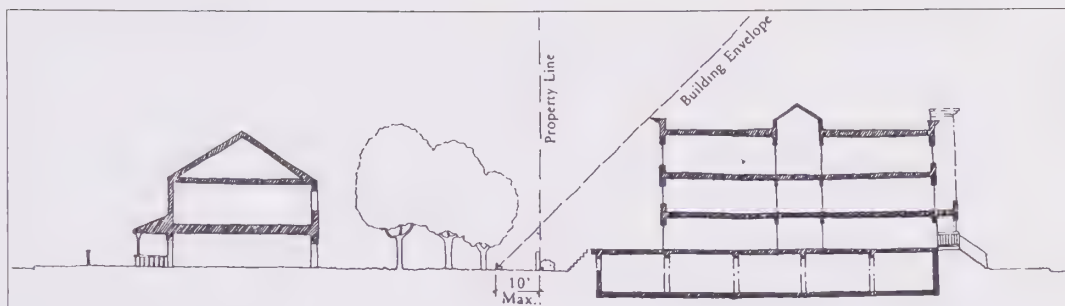


Berkeley's many historic buildings contribute to the charming fine-grained fabric.

window and door rhythm, bay window proportions and roof massing are ways to incorporate new projects into the fabric of the corridor.

Solar Orientation - Berkeley's coastal climate makes solar access an important livability consideration. All buildings, whether Avenue Node, Avenue Mixed-Use or Neighborhood Residential, should be designed with sun orientation in mind.

New buildings along the north side of University Avenue must avoid blocking the sun of all but a small portion of an adjoining parcel to the rear. Specifically, a new building shall not cast a shadow more than twenty feet (20) onto the adjacent property rear yard when the southern sun is at a 29 degree angle on the winter solstice (see diagram). One way to meet this standard is for the new building on University to step or scale-

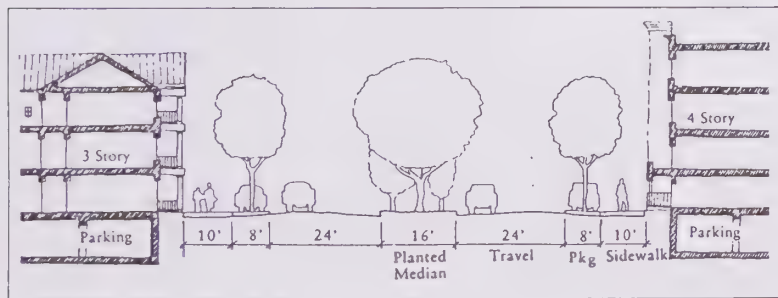


A building may not cast a shadow greater than 10' on an adjacent rear yard when the southern sun is at a 45 degree angle.

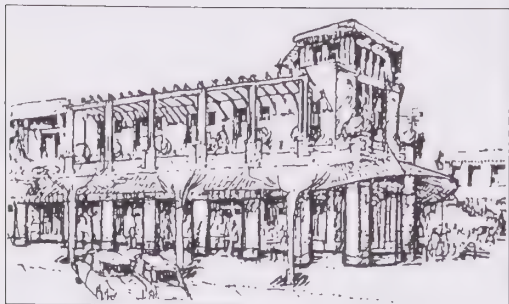
down as it approaches the rear property line, so as not to obstruct direct sunlight to adjacent properties.

To preserve the light and air of existing structures on either side of a University Avenue parcel, new developments should avoid building blank walls adjacent to the windows of an existing building. Instead, a series of courtyards or light wells should be integrated into the design to preserve light and air to the existing structure.

Privacy - New buildings on the south side of University Avenue will not shade adjacent rear parcels, but may affect the privacy of existing residents. To preserve the privacy of existing residences and to avoid unnecessarily massive walls along property lines, rear yard setbacks of buildings on the south side of University Avenue should be set back and staggered an average of 20 feet from the property line. (See diagram.)



Along University Avenue, new buildings should line the street, helping to create a sense of enclosure.



Large buildings can be made to feel more pedestrian-friendly by accentuating certain elements, such as corner elements, and by creating the appearance of several smaller projects.

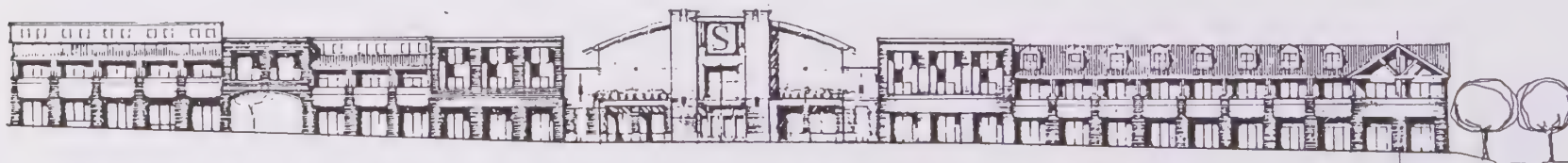
Massing

In general, buildings that meet the higher end of the density/intensity ranges are encouraged in order to create a more urban environment and provide as many residential units as possible within proximity to University Avenue and transit. However, projects that abut a lower-intensity residential neighborhood should minimize their impact by stepping down or becoming lower as they approach the residential site. For example, a proposed three-story building may step down to become one or two stories at the rear of the lot to conform to the scale of the adjacent neighbor and to minimize shadowing onto adjacent properties, as described in the Solar Orientation guidelines, or to avoid a tall, looming wall at the rear property line as described in the Privacy guidelines.

Large-scale projects, whether they are industrial, commercial, live/work, or residential, often diminish the liveliness of the street by their sameness

of detail and monotonous massing and this is undesirable. Instead, these projects could appear as a series of small buildings. Variations in floor level, roof shapes and materials, architectural details, and finishes help create the appearance of several smaller projects. To further reduce these projects' massive appearance, elements of human scale should be incorporated into the building's design.

Diverse and articulated massing is encouraged. Entries, bays, and other details should orient to streets and pedestrian-ways, creating an interesting and active public realm. Highlight building entries through the massing of the building. Greater height can be used to accentuate entries with central entry plazas or corner tower elements. Corners and key viewpoints should be emphasized with landmark towers and/or special entries. Street elevations should be broken with reveals, recesses, detailing, and other architectural features to provide visual interest.



Large buildings articulated architecturally to reduce the building mass and appear like a series of smaller buildings.

Design for Safety

Safety is an important issue for Berkeley's residents. The areas in which safety is the biggest concern are not coincidentally also the areas where there are the most under-utilized or vacant sites and therefore few people to monitor these places. Building design can greatly improve the security of such places by providing "eyes" on the streets.

Plazas, pedestrian ways, courtyards and streets should be fronted with doors and windows, and other active uses. Undesirable activities are less likely to occur if visibility is clear and uninterrupted.



Public safety is often a greater problem in areas where there are a number of under-utilized and vacant lots.

Inaccessible spaces between buildings should be avoided. "Hiding" places such as spaces under stairs or poorly lit niches should be minimized. Entries, plazas and courtyards should be well lit.

Building Configuration and Orientation

Buildings should address and reinforce streets, pedestrian paths, parks, and plazas by locating the building along the street property line, unless usable street amenity space is created. Line this facade with entries, windows, bays, porches, and other articulated features. High intensity mixed-use and residential projects should be designed to array living units or upper story offices around a central interior courtyard and to the street.

Parking should not dominate the experience along University and San Pablo Avenues, nor the site streets, and needs to be integrated into the building or located in sub-surface lots, in small side-yard lots, or in the rear of the site. See *Parking and Garages* for more information. Courtyard open space should either be located on top of the parking podium or be a combination surface parking and plaza area.



Buildings should address and "enliven" the street with awnings, entries, windows, porches and other special features.



Avoid driveway designs that accommodate the car at the expense of the pedestrian.

combination with flat roofs. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be visually integrated and screened.

Parking and Garages

Parking garages and parking lots must not dominate the frontage of a street or inhibit pedestrian movement. In most cases, parking should be placed behind, below, or to the side of buildings.

Surface Parking - Parking for lower-density residential, commercial, and industrial projects, such as those located in West Berkeley, Transitional Residential, and Neighborhood Residential areas, should be provided in interior courtyards, in garages, carports, uncovered spaces at the rear of the property, or in small sideyard lots. To reduce the amount of space devoted to parking, tandem parking spaces are strongly encouraged.

Courtyard parking can be incorporated into the design of higher density buildings. The courtyard is located in the interior of the site and the offices or units face onto the courtyard. These courtyards should double as entry courts and be planted to provide shade. Where possible, they should be paved with special materials. Use of surface parking as shared hard-scaped play areas should also be considered in the design, where feasible.

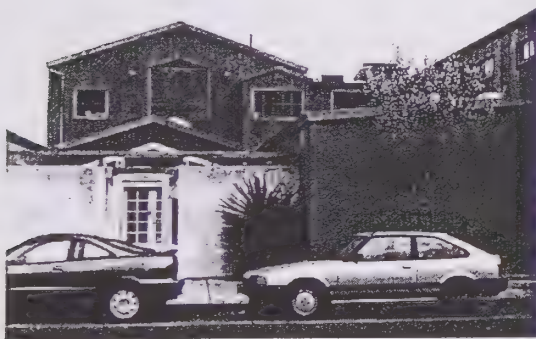
Surface parking lots should be landscaped to provide shade and avoid large, uninterrupted areas of pavement. Trees should be planted liberally, so that a majority of the parking area is shaded in summer months. Hedges, vines or other materials may be used along property lines to screen parking from neighboring buildings.



Parking shall not dominate the frontage of a street or prohibit pedestrian movement.



Arcades and Awnings are encouraged to define the pedestrian-oriented area.



Primary entries must be visible from the street.

Facades

Building facades should be articulated in a pattern that complements the historic facade patterns of the area. (For information on Retail Facades, see *Avenue Nodes*.)

Entries - Primary entrances should orient to and be visible from streets, plazas, or parks. Mixed-use, multi-family residential buildings and office buildings should provide entries every 50 to 60 feet and bays, balconies and upper facade projections every 25 to 30 feet. Single-family homes, townhomes and ground floor retail uses should provide entries every 25 to 30 feet. Secondary entries can be provided from rear, sideyard, or sub-surface parking areas. Street access to upper story office or residential uses should be frequent, rather than a single entry connecting to long internal corridors.

Residential entries should be enhanced with porticos, gated stairways, porches or other special entry features. The design of residential entries should be clearly distinct from retail entries in order to signal to pedestrians the difference in uses.

Porticos, arcades, bays, windows and balconies that overlook streets, rear yards and interior courtyards are strongly encouraged to provide indoor/outdoor connections. Porches and patios should be accessible directly from the street or podium courtyard and should be a minimum of 6 feet deep. Porches are recommended in single-family residential areas to provide an outdoor transitional, street-facing space.

Windows - In general, the pattern of window openings should correspond with the overall rhythm of the building massing its entry locations, and to the rhythm of other similar buildings in the area. Avoid scale-less, inoperable windows. Windows and door frames should be high quality and should create depth in the front facade to emphasize the mass and integrity of the wall.

Roofs

Roofs are an important visual element. Roofs should not be merely cosmetic, but should relate to facade articulation and overall building massing. Gable and hip roofs, composed of a dominant volume augmented with dormers, should predominate. Distinctive, massive cornices are encouraged in

Benches and small “cafe” tables for casual outdoor seating are encouraged along the retail frontages, as long they are outside the public right-of-way and do not impede pedestrian movements along sidewalks, nor at curbs.

Courtyards - Courtyards can occur on the ground level, on the podium above the parking, and on upper level decks. They should contain shared facilities and paths surrounded by porches, patios, and entry porticos and should be landscaped to provide both common and private open space. Steps should connect the courtyards directly to the street within and to the surrounding neighborhood. These steps may be gated for security. Roof decks are also encouraged. They should be integrated into the overall building architecture, provide wind screens and include landscaping.

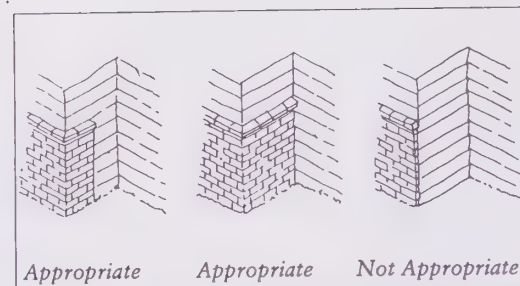
Pedestrian Walkways - Pedestrian walkways, such as those proposed for the Arts District, the Adult School, the Greenway, or Spenger’s parking lot, should be enhanced with building entries, windows and/or pleasant and protective landscaping. Ideally, pedestrian walkways should be adjacent to buildings and be overlooked by frequent entries or windows. In any event, walkways should be at least 4 feet wide

and should be separated with a landscape buffer that is at least 4 feet wide. Trees should be planted along walkways no further than thirty feet on center.

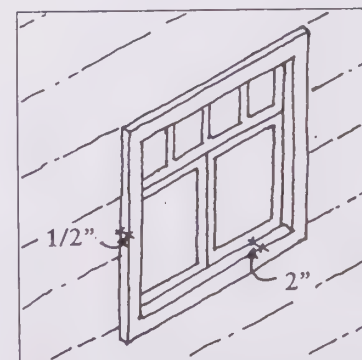
Materials

Building materials should convey a sense of durability and permanence. Smooth-finish stucco, wood siding, brick, and shingles should predominate in Neighborhood and Transitional Residential designations; Avenue Node, Node Residential and West Berkeley buildings may also utilize stone, poured-in-place concrete and split-face concrete block. Tile and masonry should be used judiciously for accents. Glass curtain walls and reflective glass are prohibited.

Fences - Where visible from the street or common open space, fences and walls should be built with attractive, long-lasting materials, including (but not limited to) wrought iron, redwood, split-faced concrete block, tile, and stone. Screens of vegetation are also encouraged.



Exterior finishes must wrap around building corners.



Window frames should not be flush with the exterior finish.

Driveway - Avoid driveway designs that accommodate the car at the expense of the pedestrian. Pedestrian crossing distances should be minimized across driveways and parking aisles. To maintain pedestrian safety, driveways should not exceed an uninterrupted width of 20 feet at streetside property lines.

Garages and Carports - All residential garage doors should be designed to have an attractive appearance. Carports should be designed to have an attractive, long-lasting, and substantial appearance and to reflect the architectural style of buildings in the area. Unarticulated pipe columns and roof slabs should be avoided.

Sub-Surface and Tuck-Under Garages - Higher density projects, such as buildings built in Avenue Mixed-Use and Avenue Nodes designations, will typically provide parking in semi-subterranean or subterranean parking garages. These parking lots should be arranged so that street-facing garage entrances do not dominate the street frontage. Parking garage entries should be narrow (20' is a good width) and are preferably located on the smaller side streets perpendicular to University Avenue, provided they do not substantially impact

adjacent residents. All sub-surface parking areas should be screened from the Avenue. (See also Facades.)

Openings between parking levels and podium courtyards should be provided for access, sunlight and ventilation, but they should be secured for safety. All parking garage lighting should be shielded so that light does not shine through vents at night and headlights are not visible from the street. If forced venting is required for the garage, air should not vent directly onto the sidewalk or podium courtyards. Louvers, screen walls, porches and planting are techniques that could be used to screen air and light vents to the street.

Open Space

Wherever possible, buildings should provide some kind of outdoor open space. Retail buildings should provide plazas with outdoor seating and cafes. Offices should provide a combination of entry plazas, interior courtyards and roof gardens. Multi-family buildings may provide upper-level courtyards and/or rooftop gardens, balconies, and patios for private use. To take advantage of solar orientation, courtyards and plazas should face south, whenever possible.

All courtyards, plazas, and private yards should be landscaped according to their purpose and extent of public use. Single-family, live/work and townhomes will have front and backyards.

Plazas and Outdoor Seating - At-grade plazas are encouraged where large amounts of pedestrian activity are expected to occur. Plazas should include outdoor seating, special paving, water features, landscaping, attractive buildings entries and/or other place-making features. Shade-making elements such as trees, trellis, and umbrellas are encouraged. Plazas should be located to take advantage of building entries and windows to enhance informal surveillance of the area.



Small plazas are encouraged where high levels of pedestrian activity are expected.

AVENUE NODE

Community Character

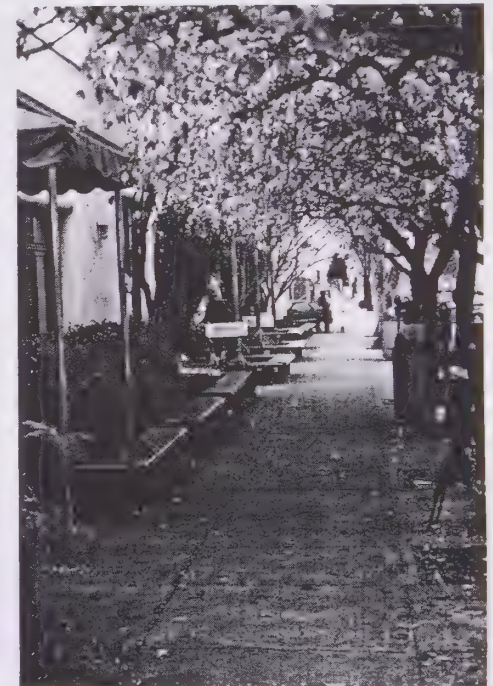
The Avenue Nodes are areas which have a concentration of retail or office, as well as housing. At these key locations, new high density mixed-use projects should be built, while existing lower-intensity commercial and residential buildings should be encouraged to expand and/or re-configure to provide additional square footage for supporting ancillary shops and upper story apartments or professional offices.

Fourth Street is a thriving mixed-use neighborhood in West Berkeley.

The seven Avenue Nodes are as follows: 1) Fourth Street in West Berkeley, 2) West University Avenue, 3) San Pablo Avenue, 4) University Avenue at the Adult School; 5) University at Acton Street, 6) University at California Street and 7) Downtown. See the Land Use section for further information on each of these sites. For specific design guidelines for the downtown area, see the “Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines” and the “Downtown Berkeley Public Improvements Plan.” For building heights in the Fourth Street Node, see the “West Berkeley Plan.”

Building Configuration

All Avenue Node buildings should front on University Avenue, Fourth Street, and Shattuck Avenue and be lined with main entries and storefronts. Ground floor space should be occupied with retail shops or services, while upper levels must be occupied by residential units or offices.



Lighting

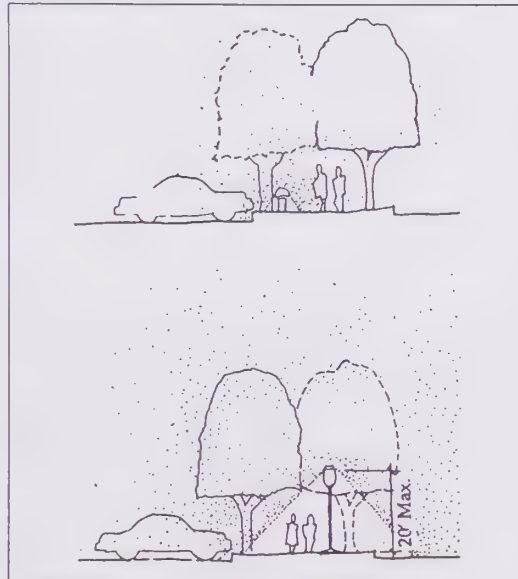
Courtyards, pedestrian pathways and plazas should be illuminated with fixtures that are of an appropriate scale and located and designed to minimize direct glare beyond the service area. Light standards should be under 20' in height to relate to a human scale. Bollards which are directed at the path or landscaping are encouraged along pedestrian pathways and plazas to enhance evening activities and minimize glare. Use white, clean light, which doesn't discolor.

Signage

A coordinated signage plan should be provided for each building which shows sign placement, size, lettering style, and materials. In general, window and awning signs are encouraged over wall signs or internally lit signs. Signs for buildings along University Avenue are only permitted at the ground-floor level. Window signs must maintain the "transparency" of the window



Exterior lighting shall be located to minimize glare.



Luminate pedestrian paths with bollards or lighting fixtures that are of an appropriate scale.

and must be permanently attached. New billboards are not permitted. See also the Sign Ordinance.

Site Amenities

Site accessories such as bike racks, litter cans, planters, benches, tree guards, and light standards should be durable and attractive.

Trash cans for private use need to be stored in a garage or a trash enclosure which is not visible from the street and which is landscaped. Trash cans for public use should be durable and attractive.

AVENUE NODE

Community Character

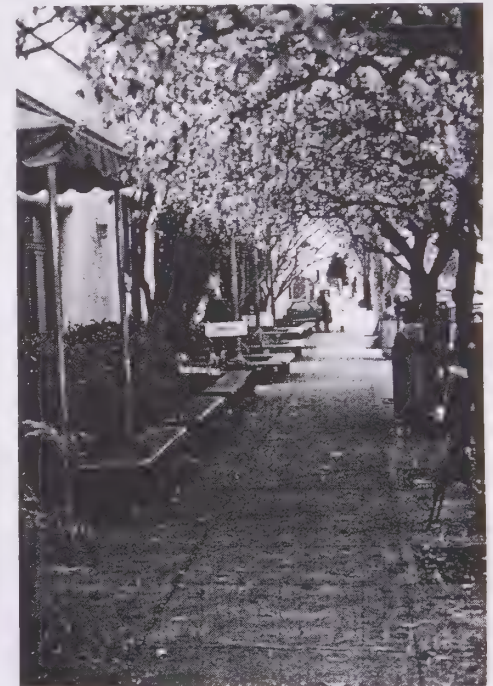
The Avenue Nodes are areas which have a concentration of retail or office, as well as housing. At these key locations, new high density mixed-use projects should be built, while existing lower-intensity commercial and residential buildings should be encouraged to expand and/or re-configure to provide additional square footage for supporting ancillary shops and upper story apartments or professional offices.

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Building Configuration

All Avenue Node buildings should front on University Avenue, Fourth Street, and Shattuck Avenue and be lined with main entries and storefronts. Ground floor space should be occupied with retail shops or services, while upper levels must be occupied by residential units or offices.



Massing

Building massing of projects in the Avenue Nodes should be such that the street edge is 2 to 4 stories high. Buildings should step down as they back onto residential areas. The Solar Orientation and Privacy sections of the General Design guidelines also apply.

Facade

Ground Floor Retail - New Avenue Node buildings must be lined with storefronts and entries that create an active, interesting streetscape. At the ground floor level, retail uses should be configured in short increments with columns or piers

placed no more than 25 - 30 feet apart; entries to shops should also be placed every 25 - 30 feet. Display windows should line the street, with no more than 6 feet of blank, non-window wall space in every 25 feet of facade. Display windows should be clear or lightly tinted, non-reflective transparent glass and should begin no higher than 30 inches above finish sidewalk grade.

A base should visually carry the weight of the building and should match the height of neighboring buildings. A base can be made by thickening the walls or a change in material and color. Ground

Floor Retail on corner lots should round the corner with display windows, base and trim detailing, or a corner entry.

Ceiling heights for storefronts should be at least 12 feet, in order to mimic the style of existing similar buildings. Entries at the corner are also encouraged. Mezzanine levels are also strongly encouraged.

Awnings- Awnings should clearly define each retail shop. Separate awnings should establish the individual identity of

West University Avenue contains a concentration of Indian shops and businesses.



small shops and draw attention to their entry. Awning breaks also provide an opportunity for expression of vertical facade elements and structural piers. Awnings should be complementary to the building's color.

Signs— Signs should be high quality and pedestrian-oriented in size and placement. See also the Signage section of the General Design Guidelines.

Parking and Garages

Avenue Node parking should be located in sub-surface parking, in ground-level parking areas integrated into the building facade and screened from the street, or behind buildings. Wherever possible, street-facing parking should be avoided on University Avenue, Shattuck Avenue, and Fourth Street. See also the Parking and Garages section of the General Guidelines.



Avenue Node buildings must be lined with continuous storefronts and entries that create an active, interesting streetscape.

Andronico's supermarket is the heart of the Acton Node and functions as this Node's primary neighborhood center.

Massing

Building massing of projects in the Avenue Nodes should be such that the street edge is 2 to 4 stories high. Buildings should step down as they back onto residential areas. The Solar Orientation and Privacy sections of the General Design guidelines also apply.

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AVENUE MIXED-USE

Community Character

Avenue Mixed-Use buildings are two to three stories with upper story residential and ground floor retail and/or small offices. Allowances can be made for upper story live-work and/or offices. Ground floor retail is required, unless a financial hardship can be demonstrated. A variety of unit type and a mix of affordable and market rate housing are desirable, to meet the needs of both large and small households of different incomes levels.

Building Configuration

These multi-story residential buildings should have parking located either in sub-surface garages, in ground level parking areas integrated into the building facade and screened from the street, in the rear of the lot, or in parking courtyards. They will be two- to three-story buildings that front on the Avenue and have a private courtyard open area for the building's residents. See also the "Parking and Garages" section of the General Guidelines.

Integration with the Neighbors - Buildings should step down as they approach the Transitional Residential designations to the rear and should adhere to the sun orientation guidelines described in the General Design Guidelines.

Courtyards - Due to the density of these buildings, it is important that Avenue Mixed-Use buildings have open space in the form of courtyards, decks, balconies, and roof gardens. Courtyards should be placed on the sunny side of buildings wherever possible. For buildings located on the south side of University Avenue, the courtyards can simply be placed in the rear of the lots to maximize exposure. This placement of the courtyards also allows the building to step down as it nears the adjacent property.

Special Conditions

Spenger's Parking Lot is a major opportunity site for development. When designing this mixed-use project, there are a number of factors that need to be taken into consideration:

- The building or series of buildings should not be more than 40 feet tall and should be articulated in a pattern that echoes the rhythm of surrounding smaller-scale buildings.
- Ground floor retail must be provided on both Fourth Street and Hearst Street. The upper stories should be occupied with office space or other entertainment uses, such as a cinema. The site should provide a plaza and midblock passage to access the Amtrak Stop from Fourth Street. The plaza and Amtrak platform should be fronted with active uses, such as a cafe, and with windows and doors. The parking should be located at the interior of the site or adjacent to the University Avenue overpass.



Spenger's Parking Lot is a major opportunity site.

NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL

Community Character

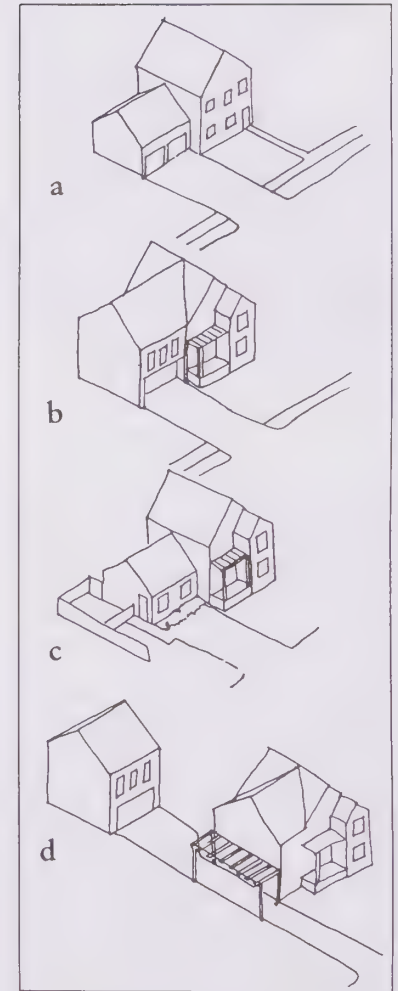
This area is substantially developed with existing single-family homes, duplexes, and small apartment buildings. There is some opportunity for infill and redevelopment. New housing units should emulate the quality and character of older surrounding neighborhood. Generally, this consists of one- to two-story small lot single-family houses and small apartments with “tuck under” garages; in some cases, rear yard garages are also utilized.

Building Configuration

Residential entries should be visible from the street and articulated by a porch. Windows and bay windows for interior living spaces should overlook streets and parking areas. Detached second units may be placed in the rear of the property or above the garage.

Infill - All housing types should reflect the character of older single-family housing in the surrounding area. Duplexes may be provided as stacked flats or side-by-side attached units provided they clearly resemble single-family housing.

Intensification Strategies - Lot intensification strategies include (a) story additions to main house, (b) story addition to garage, (c) house expansion with rear garage addition, and (d) house expansion with rear garage and ancillary unit.



Lot intensification strategies include (a) story additions to main house, (b) story addition to garage, (c) house expansion with rear garage addition, and (d) house expansion with rear garage and ancillary unit.

However, for buildings on the north side of University Avenue, the solution is not so simple. By holding the street edge and the building density, the courtyard, if placed in the rear without adjusting the building footprint, will be shaded. Possible solutions include 1) stepping back the building as it approaches the courtyard or 2) placing the upper level courtyard on the street-facing facade.

Facade

Ground Floor Retail - New Avenue Mixed-Use buildings must have some ground floor storefront(s) or small office spaces that help to create an active, interesting streetscape. At the ground floor level, retail uses should be configured in short increments with columns or piers placed no more than 25 - 30 feet apart; entries to shops should also be placed every 25 - 30 feet. Display windows should face the street, with no more than 12 feet of blank, non-window wall space in every 50 feet of facade. Display windows should be clear or lightly tinted, non-reflective transparent glass and should begin no higher than 30 inches above finish sidewalk grade. A base should visually carry the weight of the building and should match the height of neighboring buildings. A base can be made by thickening the walls or a



Courtyards of south-facing buildings on University Avenue can either: 1) be placed in the rear of the lot with the building massing stepping down as it approaches or 2) located above grade on University Avenue but with a maximum frontage of 50%

change in material and color. Ground Floor Retail on corner lots should round the corner with display windows, base and trim detailing, or a corner entry.

Ceiling heights for storefronts should be at least 12 feet, in order to mimic the style of existing similar buildings. Entries at the corner are also encouraged. Mezzanine levels are also strongly encouraged.

Awnings - Awnings should clearly define each retail shop. Separate awnings should establish the individual identity of small shops and draw attention to their entry. Awning breaks also provide an opportunity for expression of vertical facade elements and structural piers. Awnings should be complementary to the building's color.

Signs - Signs should be high quality and pedestrian-oriented in size and placement. See also the Signage section of the General Design Guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

The following action items are necessary to implement the recommendations of the Strategic Plan. Approximate time-frames are suggested for each item to guide future staffing and funding decisions. Additional recommendations related to funding mechanisms is provided in the next table.

Projects Underway

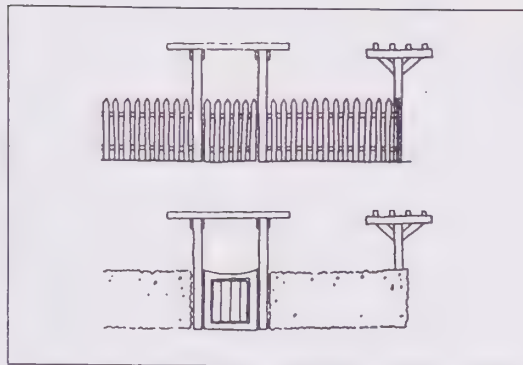
- Community policing program is underway, including an increase in bike patrol units for University Avenue.
- Neighborhood and merchant associations formed and meeting regularly.
- New clinic service at Sixth and University facility.
- Street tree planting in University Avenue median according to community's design recommendations.
- Bike racks being installed at selected locations along the Avenue.
- Arts District plan and partial funding approved for Addison Street.
- Seismic Rehab Revolving Loan Fund pilot project initiated.
- Zoning changes in process to clarify Home Occupations and Live-Work.
- Housing Trust Fund guidelines have been revised.
- New residential and mixed-use development projects underway on several sites along the corridor.
- City currently working with property owners at Acton/University Avenue node.
- Redevelopment Agency funds available for West Berkeley improvements (e.g. Spenger's parking lot redevelopment and bicycle/pedestrian bridge to waterfront.)
- Aquatic Park Master Plan is in process.
- Civic Center Master Plan is in process.



Details and reveals are encouraged, especially around windows, doors and posts.

Facade

Entries - Building entrances should be articulated with balconies, bays, porches, stoops or equivalent features and face the street. They should be embellished to animate streets and gardens and give expression to individual units. Front doors are encouraged that are sturdy, decorative and reflect the architectural style of the unit. Corner entries are encouraged, when appropriate.



Fences in the front yard should not be taller than 42". Trellises are encouraged to define entries.

Front elevation - Details and reveals are encouraged, especially around windows, doors and posts. Below cantilevered bays or decks, visible joists, brackets or posts are encouraged. In no case shall the street facade of a building consist of an unarticulated blank wall.

Fences & Walls - Street-facing fences and walls should maintain a visual connection from the sidewalk to the unit.

Parking and Garages

Neighborhood Residential parking should be located in garages and carports that are preferably placed in the rear of the property or recessed from the front facade. Driveways should be narrow at sidewalks. Use of a middle planting strip (Hollywood Drives) and special pavers are encouraged. (For more information on parking and garages, see the General Guidelines.)

Action Item	Phase 1 Immediate	Phase 2 Mid-Term	Phase 3 Long Term
- Discourage or prohibit new alcohol-related establishments, auto-oriented uses, and industrial/warehouses along University Avenue.	✓		
Urban Design			
• Festival lighting system installed in University Avenue median.	✓		
• Prepare detailed design of streetscape improvements, identify phase one components, and refine cost estimates and funding sources.	✓	✓	
• Plant trees in parking lanes and repair sidewalks.	✓	✓	
• Improve crosswalks and construct sidewalk corner "bulb-outs."	✓	✓	
• Install street furniture and safety telephones.	✓	✓	
• Install improved transit shelters and self-cleaning public restrooms.	✓	✓	
• Install median irrigation system.	✓		
• Expand design review authority to include all new and renovated buildings along University Avenue.	✓		
• Institute a process to work with developers to implement streetscape improvements along property frontages.	✓		
• Create a public arts program for University Avenue.	✓	✓	
• Revise and strengthen sign ordinance enforcement efforts.	✓	✓	
• Work with local merchants to create an integrated public signage and banner program for the Avenue.	✓	✓	
• Increase funding for building code enforcement, develop a target list of properties that are in need of significant repair, and aggressively work with property owners.	✓	✓	✓
• Consider strengthening the anti-bligh ordinance.	✓		
• Fund a youth program to remove graffiti on a continuing basis.	✓	✓	✓
• Review the City's parks maintenance programs and provide strategies for more effective maintenance.	✓		

Action Item	Phase 1 Immediate	Phase 2 Mid-Term	Phase 3 Long Term
Area-Wide Implementation Strategies			
Public Safety			
• Develop comprehensive Public Safety Program.	√		
• Community Policing: establish a regular meeting forum between police, merchants, residents, and property owners.	√		
• Develop an on-going system of crime data collection; link crime statistic data sets to an electronic map of the corridor.	√		
• Develop safety audits, to be conducted by the Police Department, to assess commercial buildings and neighborhoods.	√		
• Develop a set of public safety criteria to address design issues; establish a police review process for all new development proposals; establish a record-keeping database on how safety concerns have been addressed.	√		
• Form new merchant and neighborhood associations where none currently exist.	√		
• Develop a targeted graffiti and litter removal program between the merchants and the Public Works Department.	√		
Land Use			
• Create a special Zoning Overlay designation for University Avenue.			
- Establish Avenue Nodes and Avenue Residential areas as distinct land use designations within the zoning overlay.	√		
- Reduce the amount of on-site open space required and relax parking standards for residential projects on University Avenue.	√		
- Set minimum and maximum building height limits for residential, mixed-use, and commercial buildings within Avenue Nodes and Avenue Residential areas.	√		
- Incorporate the University Avenue Strategic Plan Design Guidelines.	√	√	

Action Item	Phase 1 Immediate	Phase 2 Mid-Term	Phase 3 Long Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a First Time Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance Program to help existing low and moderate income residents in the study area to purchase new housing within the study area. Encourage and remove barriers to creative ownership programs, such as limited equity coops, sweat equity housing, co-housing, and conversion of rental housing to ownership. Work with local private developers and non-profits to construct at least one additional senior housing project along the University Avenue corridor. Expand the Residential Rehab Loan Fund to apply to the University Avenue planning area. Work with residents to establish a Community Management Task Force to provide advice and coordination of issues relating to the management of housing and social services. 	 √ √ √	√ √ √ √	√
Transportation (See also Urban Design.)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with AC Transit and U.C. to study the feasibility of creating a special University Avenue Electric Shuttle System. Implement the University Avenue Electric Shuttle System. Work with appropriate agencies to implement commuter rail service on the SPRR train tracks and provide timed bus transfers to buses along University Avenue. Prepare a Master Plan for the Spenger's parking lot that creates a multi-modal transportation hub (see Transportation section for preferred uses and design). Use Redevelopment Agency funds to assist development of a Fourth Street parking structure. Complete the Bicycle Master Plan and, at a minimum, identify bicycle routes within the University Avenue corridor that place bikes on parallel routes. 	 √	√ √ √ √ √	 √ √ √ √

Action Item	Phase 1 Immediate	Phase 2 Mid-Term	Phase 3 Long Term
Economic Development			
• Create a coordinated marketing program and annual promotional events series with University Avenue merchants.	✓	✓	✓
• Focus new business attraction efforts on bringing more small, locally-owned neighborhood-serving businesses to the area, particularly within Avenue Nodes. Target key “anchor” tenants (see also each sub-area).	✓	✓	✓
• Maintain on-going communication with existing anchor tenants in each node to ensure their stability and long-term viability.	✓	✓	✓
• Review the effectiveness of all of the City’s small business support programs, such as the Citywide Loan Fund and the Facade Improvement Grant.	✓		
• Establish an education and training program that links merchants with private financing sources and management techniques.	✓	✓	
• Establish linkages to entrepreneurship training programs and the Alameda County Small Business Development Center.	✓	✓	
• Target the Business and Real Estate Assistance Program to University Avenue merchants.	✓	✓	✓
• Investigate options for funding future merchant efforts and physical improvements, such as a Business Improvement District, assessment districts, and redevelopment authorities (see Financing Strategy)	✓		
Housing (See also Land Use)			
• Create a package of incentives aimed at encouraging developers to build new market rate housing along the University Avenue corridor.	✓	✓	
• Use the City’s Housing Trust Fund to provide financial assistance to residential projects on University Avenue.	✓	✓	✓

Action Item	Phase 1 Immediate	Phase 2 Mid-Term	Phase 3 Long Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint the underside of the University Avenue Bridge and install lighting. Identify an appropriate location for murals or sanctioned graffiti. • Work with property owners and merchants in the Fourth Street Node to ensure that the mix of uses remains economically healthy. Encourage additional infill. • Work with property owners in the area south of University and west of Fourth Street to encourage new light industrial, small-scale office, and live-work. • Consider amending the West Berkeley Plan to allow nighttime entertainment uses south of University and west of Fourth Street. • Use the City of Berkeley Business Attraction Program to encourage new ethnically oriented businesses to locate in the West University Node. • Target the Residential Rehab Program to two areas: the dilapidated buildings at Ninth and Delaware and the blocks surrounding Columbus School. • Upgrade and renovate the primary care facility at 6th and University (West Berkeley Family Practice). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓
Sub-Area Two			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design West Street (Santa Fe Pacific Right-of-Way) Greenway and identify potential funding sources. • Construct West Street Greenway. • Give the Acton/University Avenue node the City's highest priority in terms of planning, development review, streetscape improvements, and funding considerations because of its potential to truly transform the mid-section of University Avenue. Focus on building additional housing in the area. • Work with the property owners to prepare a site plan for the Berkeley Plaza Motel site. • Prepare a joint City/School District Master Plan for the West Campus Adult Education Center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ 	

Action Item	Phase 1 Immediate	Phase 2 Mid-Term	Phase 3 Long Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement the Arts District plan for Addison Street. Work with U.C. to plan a "Campus Gateway" at Oxford and University and perhaps a "Downtown Gateway" at Milvia and University Avenue. Provide Commercial Re-tenanting Assistance specifically targeted to entertainment and local-serving specialty food and retail uses. 	√ √	√ √ √	 √ √

Action Item	Phase 1 Immediate	Phase 2 Mid-Term	Phase 3 Long Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sacramento and California should be emphasized as important pedestrian routes to BART and Ohlone Park. Provide special signage lighting, landscaping, and pedestrian-friendly intersections. Do not permit additional gas stations within this area, and in the long term, work to redevelop the station at the intersection of Sacramento and University to higher intensity, transit-oriented office, retail and residential uses. 		√	√
Sub-Area Four			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a pilot retail facade renovation program. Use the block between Milvia and Shattuck as the first intervention area. Proceed with the seismic rehab revolving loan fund pilot project to encourage renovation of unsafe buildings in the downtown area. Work with the UC Theater to initiate seismic renovations and possible expansion. Review the provisions of the SRO Ordinance and amend the conversion provision. Identify issues and propose options to facilitate SRO restoration and rehabilitation. Prepare a Master Plan for the future redevelopment of the State Department of Health facility. Coordinate and work cooperatively with the University of California. Target the City's Berkeley Way parking lot as a top priority for redevelopment with housing and replacement parking. The Oxford Street parking lot should be considered as a second priority site for similar re-use. Secure a mid-block passageway between the City's Berkeley Way parking lot and University Avenue. Target sites along Oxford and Allston for high density, arts-related uses due to their proximity to the Arts District and downtown. 	√	√	√

APPENDIX

Related Documents

- University Avenue Area (General Plan) Workshop Summary, October 23, 1993
- University Avenue Area Statistical Profile, January 1994
- University Avenue (General Plan) Workshop Summary, March 3, 1994
- University Avenue Strategic Plan: Land Use, Urban Design and Economic Opportunities and Constraints, March, 1995
- Workshop Summaries, October 23, 1993 and March 3, 1994.

University Avenue Strategic Plan

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	LEVELS OF SERVICE	TARGET POPULATION	CLIENTS SERVED	RESIDENCE
Pro Per 2100 MLK Jr. Way	legal aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Net 	low/moderate income, not eligible for Legal Aid	50-60 month open 5 hrs pr week	
McKinley House 2111 McKinley	transitional housing, family case management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	homeless families	6 families daily	Berkeley
Berkeley Boosters University	after school recreation, classes and field trips; RESPECT Ambassadors/ Guides program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance 	children between the 11-14 yrs old	100 monthly	Berkeley
Asians for Job Opportunities 1911 Addison	vocational, clerical, computer literacy, ESL, occupational, bilingual skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	adults with limited English skills	60 daily	70% in Berkeley; 30% outside Berkeley
Family Violence Law Center	counseling, support groups around domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net • Crisis 	mostly low income women	440 restraining orders per year; 30 phone calls per month, no drop-ins	15% Berkeley (mostly south and west Berkeley residents); rest from North County
Social Security Admin. 1950 University	SSA, SSI, SSDI, food vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	general population		North and East Bay
Psychological Services Center 2030 Milvia	individual and group psychotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	general population (no homeless or chronics) domestic violence is 50% of all services	35-40 weekly	50% Berkeley; 50% East Bay
COB First Source Employment 2140 Shattuck	job placement and employment referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	"job ready" homeless, low and moderate income; 18 yrs and over	260 placed yearly	Berkeley
Bonita House Residence 1910 Hearst	transitional housing and case management support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	homeless with more than one disability (e.g. mental, physical, substance abuse, etc.)	12 daily	mainly Berkeley; a few County

University Avenue Strategic Plan


Social Service Providers, Services and Clients

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	LEVELS OF SERVICE	TARGET POPULATION	CLIENTS SERVED	RESIDENCE
Downtown					
COB Health Services 2180 Milvia	citywide prog. admin., nurse, home vists, homeless exams, educat, nutrit., birth/death cert., vital stats, comm. disease assess,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net • Crisis 	general population	four to six daily nurse of the day; 50-60 vital stats; (record requests)	Berkeley
Berkeley Emergency Food and Shelter Project (Existing) 1930 Center	emergency shelter, food, counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis 	acute and chronically homeless individuals with one or more disabilities	60 per night non-winter; 82 per night in winter	downtown Berkeley homeless
Multi Agency Service Center (Future) 1930 Center	above plus comprehensive case mgmt, counseling, linkages to mental health, and housing referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net • Crisis 	acute and chronically homeless individuals with one or more disabilities	60-82 per night shelter; 40-60 day time use	100% Berkeley homeless
Berkeley/Albany YMCA 2001 Allston	permanent & transient housing, recreation, socialization, art classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance 	general population	5,500 per year	4,057 from Berkeley; 1,500 from outside Berkeley
COB Court Program 1844 Addison	individual and group mental health counseling; case management support; medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net • Crisis 	domestic violence (30%); substance abuse (35%); one+ disabilities (30%); other (15%)	250 per year	vast majority from Berkeley
Berkeley Place 1844 Addison	hearing impaired counseling, interpreting, training (coping/living skills, lip reading, sign language), client advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Net 	majority are seniors	5-10 daily	390 per year (90 from University Ave. area, Berkeley from Berkeley overall, 25 outside Berkeley)
Berkeley/Oakland Support Services 2100 MLK Jr. Way	represent. payee for SSI, employment, placement and direct counseling, rental assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net • Crisis 	acute and chronic homeless individuals and families; persons with more than one disability (e.g. mental, physical, substance abuse)	75 daily	62% from Berkeley, all else from Oakland

University Avenue Strategic Plan

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	LEVELS OF SERVICE	TARGET POPULATION	CLIENTS SERVED	RESIDENCE
Missionary Church of God and Christ 1125 Allston	recovery center for addicts and alcoholics; food program(mostly off site); resource center/drug prevention for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net • Crisis 	homeless adults and families; at risk 7-17 yr. olds	40 daily on site; 100-300 weekly off site (provo park & women's homeless cntr)	Berkeley, Oakland, county
West Berkeley YMCA/ Headstart 2009 9th St.	education, socialization, recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance 	3-5 yr olds	350 yearly	254 Berkeley (76 University Ave area); 33 outside Berkeley
Needle Exchange Hearst/San Pablo	exchange of new syringes for used ones; also outreach & information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance 	IV drug users & those in contact w/IV drug users	90 persons/week; 3K-4K syr.exch'd/wk 2,000 condoms/wk	Not available
UA Homes 1040 University	permanent housing, support services, classes, job training, and gardening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	homeless adults	74 daily	Berkeley based homeless or shelter/transitional housing
Association for Retarded Citizens 1007 University	speech, behavioral, occupational therapy, sheltered workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	profoundly retarded	46 daily	100% Berkeley
Liberty Hill Baptist Church 997 University	food distribution; AA/NA meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Net • Crisis 	homeless adults and families; recovering alcoholics/drug users	200 monthly (one day a month); 3 times a week	Berkeley; Oakland, County
COB Public Health Clinic 830 University	health promotion, disease prevention, risk assessment, treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	low income adult minorities, immigrants; some women and children	1,440 monthly	50% Berkeley; 50% other
West Berkeley Family Practice (not yet reopened) 2031 6th St.	general medical care, perinatal, chiropractic, podiatry, dental care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	low income w/out health care; adults and pediatrics	2,000 first year	outreach planned for West Berkeley area
West Berkeley Senior Center 1900 6th St.	meals, social activities, info and referral, community meetings, volunteer activ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	elderly 55+	80-90 daily	majority from W. Berkeley; some from Oakland and Richmond

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	LEVELS OF SERVICE	TARGET POPULATION	CLIENTS SERVED	RESIDENCE
West of McKinley					
Salvation Army 1535 University	food, clothing, motel vouchers, PGE assist., referrals, tutoring/ mentoring, day camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	low income families, vets, homeless and seniors	50-60 weekly	Berkeley, Albany, Kensington, Oakland (summer day camps)
Veterans Assistant Center 1403 Addison	job counseling; basic job preparation; job coaching; employer assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Net • Crisis 	"job ready" vets& non-vets 60-70% low income; 30% mod income; 15% homeless	20-25 daily	50% Oakland; 30% Berkeley; 20% other
Erna P. Harris Residence (Bel Aire) 1330 University	permanent housing; case management support services (BOSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	homeless w/probability of more than one disability (e.g. mental, physical, substance abuse, etc.)	25 Section 8 SROs for homeless and 10 affordable one-bedrooms	Berkeley based homeless or shelter/transitional housing
Berkeley Youth Alternatives 2141 Bonar St.	after school tutorial, family counseling, computer instruction, community gardening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance • Safety Net 	at risk 7-17 yr. olds	120 daily in summer; 80-90 daily rest of year	95% Berkeley (55% University Ave area) 5% outside Berkeley
Berkeley Adult School 1222 University	ESL, life skills, nutrition, education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance 	adults	900 daily	35% Berkeley 65% non-Berkeley
Homeless Education Literacy Project Various Locations	literacy, tutorial, life skills, computer skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance 	homeless with more than one disability at BOSS, BEFP or Drop-in Center; provided thru BUSD but coordinated by BOSS	20 daily	100% Berkeley residence
West Branch Public Library 1125 University	library services, very active literacy program, meeting room, computer/ internet access, kids programs (e.g. storytime puppet shows)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment • Prevention/Advance 	general population, including homeless and group home residents	250-300 daily	Local neighborhood and West Berkeley

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